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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

JANUARY COMMENTARY

THE results of the Australian and New Zealand Elections seem to reflect a growing scepticism among all classes, clearly including organized labour, as to the benefits of nationalization. Neither result can be regarded as a victory for "Reaction". No reversal of social legislation was proposed. It had, however, become as clear in Australasia as in our country that nationalization means in practice an ever-increasing loss of control by those engaged in the nationalized industries over the conditions of their employment, and particularly so when a socialist government is in office. Some of the reasons for this are simple enough. The mere size of a nationalized industry prevents any personal contact between "centralized" management and those working in the industry, and multiplies the risks of mistakes in management due to ignorance of local conditions or sentiment. Secondly, the close association of the Trade Union leaders with the socialist parties here and in the Dominions deprives organized labour of its proper leadership when disputes arise within a nationalized industry.

THERE is, however, a deeper reason for the feeling that, under nationalization, employees of all grades suffer an increasing loss of effective freedom. That reason lies in the British forms of Parliamentary government which have been substantially copied both in New Zealand and in Australia. The executive government under the British constitution is descended from the King's household, Chancery and Secretariat. Its members, in fact as well as in name, are His Majesty's Ministers. Parliament, the great council of the nation, can advise and criticize but it cannot initiate. It can insist on a change of government but it cannot itself govern. This system grew up in the days of the negative state, when the functions of government, outside of foreign policy and defence, were, broadly speaking, confined to "keeping the king", protecting the public against the abuse of power by the different interests, and voting the taxes necessary to maintain the machinery of government and to pay the armed forces, the judiciary and the police. Parliament, under these conditions, had time not only to debate in great detail all legislation proposed to it but to keep under effective review the relatively restricted activities of the comparatively few government departments.

WE can date the positive state, perhaps, from the Education Act of 1902, and certainly from the 1906 Parliament. Since then, Parliamentary control over the executive has become increasingly ineffective, partly because of the spate of legislation, partly because of the immense increase in the number and activities of government departments, and partly because of the change in

the nature of those activities. The first two lessons need no elucidation. They are evident and self-explanatory. The third reason is the most significant. Governments have always been concerned not only with the safety but with the wellbeing of the people: they have always, therefore, been concerned to foster trade, industry and agriculture and to promote social justice. But they attempted these tasks not by themselves going into business or telling people how to farm their land but by fiscal measures and by prescribing minimum wages, maximum hours and regulations to insure health and safety. Within this political framework, the responsibility for the conduct of the day to day business of the community rested with the community. In the course of the last half century this position has been wholly altered.

TO-DAY, education, unemployment assistance and the national health service are centrally administered, and to these great services must now be added the transport, fuel and power industries, while agriculture is closely controlled and centrally directed. When the old (locally administered) poor law was abolished and public assistance became a State responsibility, the Board set up for the purpose was expressly removed from day to day Parliamentary criticism and, therefore, from Parliamentary control. The precedent has been exactly followed in all the recently nationalized industries. The worker in these industries has therefore no personal access to his employers nor any control over them through his representatives in Parliament, and when his industrial representatives, his Trade Union leaders, are partners in the government, he is, in fact if not in law, enslaved to an irresponsible machine which has been placed not above but outside the Constitution.

The effect is felt at once by the workers in the industry concerned but ultimately it will be felt just as acutely by the consumers of the goods or services which these industries supply.

WHICHEVER Party is returned to power at the next Election should face this complex constitutional issue, but it is certain that the Socialist party will never do so. It has no intention of parting with the monopoly of power which it is in process of creating and which it proposes to extend; it has learnt the supreme lesson of history that power always follows property, and that, so long as there is any substantial property in the hands of the public, this public will be the masters of the politicians. The Socialist Party intends to take away from the public the power to grant or withhold "supply", on which our liberties rest, by aggregating in its own hands, and out of Parliamentary control, all the sources of wealth.

THE Socialist defence, for sure, is that it proposes to do this in the public's interest. It is the defence put forward by every dictator from Diocletian to Hitler and Stalin. The great trouble is that the Socialist approach to the monopoly of power which they seek is by a series of irreversible acts. The old-fashioned dictators sought to impose their will on the community by force, leaving to the community the sources of power but only insisting on controlling their use. Mr. Attlee and his friends seek to persuade the community, as individuals, to surrender willingly the sources of power on which their political freedom rests. In this way the use of coercion will be substantially avoided whilst at the same time the freedom which rests on the distribution of property in private hands will be permanently lost; property once aggregated and sequestrated cannot in fact be redistributed.

THE date of the Election is still unknown but the question to be decided by the Electorate is becoming defined with increasing precision. Are we to stand alone among the nations of the west in moving forward to the totalitarian state, or are we to join, in spirit

as well as in a political alliance, with the other dominions, to United States and our partners in Western Europe in setting a term to socialist experiment, in re-establishing a free economy and in recalling our people to the realities of life as it must be lived among free and equal peoples. The significant thing is that we have no real choice. If another Socialist government is returned, they cannot expect that their bankrupt economy will be subsidized for a further term of five years by the United States and Canada. Mr. Attlee and Sir Stafford Cripps may urge British exporters to heroic efforts but our export trade has been carried to the utmost point of expansion possible under existing conditions. With a falling £ and a complete lack of confidence, the world over, in our economic stability, the conditions of a further expansion of trade are absent, and capital investment by the great creditor nations in the sterling area is not to be expected. We are faced, not with manufacturing or marketing problems only, but with a crisis of confidence, the gravest malady with which a great trading nation can ever be afflicted. The direct practical results are evident. We offer to visitors from overseas the lowest standard of material comfort and convenience known to-day in the western world. We, of all the great trading nations, are still unable to guarantee dates of delivery or standards of quality for our exports, and no importers in hard currency countries are prepared to enter into long-term contracts with us at firm prices. They anticipate a further fall in the £.

WE hope all readers of this *Review* have bought and read *Conservative Oxford*. It is a moral and intellectual challenge to much contemporary thinking. The authors are a brilliant and representative company and their challenge is important. The essays in this book reflect many different points of view in regard to policy but they have an underlying unity. They are all written from the vantage point of a complete disinterestedness and seek only those conclusions which arise from a study of the facts. They take full advantage of the fact that Conservatives are not burdened like the Socialists and the *laisser-faire* Liberals with a body of political doctrine inherited from the Victorian age which they can only abandon at the risk of losing their following.

CONSERVATIVE OXFORD has evidently a warm corner in its heart for planning, tempered with common sense. It is far more tolerant than it is likely to be in twenty years time of such concepts as the control of investment policy by the political classes. It is certainly too little aware of the fundamental evil of displacing the price mechanism by a managed economy when you depend for your bread and butter on your competitive power in the world's markets. The authors, again, are not sufficiently alarmed at the only alternative to the price mechanism in a hostile world. That alternative is, of course, the control of consumption and the power to depress, by arbitrary political action, the standard of living. This power, moreover, the Socialist Party will inevitably be compelled to use (if they are returned to power) as soon as the United States ceases to subsidize our economy.

IT is perhaps inevitable that the younger members of the Conservative Party should be more persuasive on political and constitutional issues than on economic policy. It is not inevitable but it is certain that the same is true of the great majority of our party who are still suspected by their opponents in the country of being solely concerned to put a greater proportion of the national dividend into their own pockets. The truth is that the preservation of our existing capital resources and their systematic annual increase is the sole condition of survival. The reckless dissipation of capital through the long-standing practice of treating capital paid over in death duties as expendable income, and,

under the present government, the penal taxation of business reserves, have made it almost impossible to maintain our existing premises, plant and machinery in a competitive condition, let alone to add to them sufficiently to keep pace with the growth of population and the steady demand for a higher standard of living. It is the outstanding merit of the private enterprise system that, however great the difficulties, the maintenance and, so far as is humanly possible, the systematic improvement of capital resources, and never the distribution of profits, is the major interest of the shareholders. The national and the private interests thus coincide. When there is no heritable wealth and no incentive, therefore, to save, i.e., to spend on capital goods instead of on consumption goods, the only reward open to energy and skill is an even higher rate of consumption which is directly contrary to the national interest.

THE Socialists claim to be able to combat this inherent defect of socialism by penal taxation, but in proportion as, in the interests of equality, personal incomes approach a dead level, this penal taxation must begin to fall with an ever-increasing weight on the weekly wage earner. Nor is there the slightest evidence that the vast proceeds of taxation under the socialistic economy will be to any considerable extent invested in capital goods. Quite on the contrary, the ever-increasing demand of the millions now dependent, directly or indirectly, on the State for a higher annual distribution of consumer goods and services operates so that, whatever the initial good intentions of a government may be, the programme of capital development has to be cut down to prevent inflation. Further, what governments call capital investment—money spent on the housing programme and on schools, roads and hospitals, in the main—is only of very indirect benefit to the national economy and quite useless as a contribution to restoring the balance of trade. The reason for this expenditure, by and large, is not that it increases our capital resources but that it wins votes, whereas, owing to the failure of the anti-Socialist propaganda, a remission of taxation designed to encourage and facilitate a great building up of the reserves of industry would, although essential to the national well-being, probably lose votes.

AN uneducated democracy cannot survive. It is much to be hoped, therefore, that the writers associated with *Conservative Oxford* will continue with their self-imposed task and will concentrate to a greater extent on economic questions, where much harder thinking, followed by much plainer speaking, is indispensable if our standard of life is to be maintained at anything approaching its present level.

MANY critics, and other less critical, have had their say, in these last days of 1949, about the year's books. The sad thing, particularly for publishers, is to find how completely forgotten by the end of the year are most of those greeted with such a chorus of praise when they came out only a few months, or even weeks, ago. The critics appear to be divided between Miss Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day* and Mr. George Orwell's *1984* as the best book of the year. But then, what do we mean by "best" as applied to a novel? If we are to ask that the theme be significant and the moral judgments satisfying and that the work be at the same time illuminated by creative imagination and constructed with technical skill, then it is doubtful if any such novel is written as often as once in a decade. Most good novels seem to me to fall down at the first two hurdles. The novelist's defence, if he is inclined to make one, is usually that, just as you can find all beauty in the lesser celandine (a more than dubious proposition, incidentally), so you can reveal all the mysteries of life in telling the simplest of stories about

utterly "unimportant" peoples doing quite "uninteresting" things.

THIS is where the question of moral judgment comes in. Those of us who believe that man has an immortal soul and that his purpose here on earth is to know, love and serve God are committed to a certain egalitarianism. All men are equal before God and therefore equally significant, and their problems of equal importance, but only on the spiritual plane, and in relation to God. But if the novelist believes not only that human beings are important in themselves but to themselves alone, then his work must be judged on the human plane and will only be significant if it deals significantly with some important problem of human relations. The pagan is of necessity a snob. Mr. Mauriac is by common consent one of the greatest living novelists but if he did not see his characters *sub specie aeternitatis* he would be unendurably boring. Mr. Grahame Green could never be boring, but it is his awareness of the moral problem on the supernatural plane which alone, and by his own admission, makes him important. I say "by his own admission" because he carefully labels those of his stories which raise no moral problems as "entertainments". It is a necessary critical distinction.

THERE is some risk that the publishers' Gresham's Law, that bad books drive good books off the market, may begin to operate here on the scale on which it already operates across the Atlantic. The reason is the immense increase in the cost not only of manufacturing but, still more, of distributing books. It has become an accepted axiom of American publishing that the ordinary successful book (which may be defined as the book which sells 10,000 to 12,000 copies in the U.S.A., or 5,000 copies on the British market) no longer pays for itself. For profit, the American publisher has to look to those books on which there is an artificially concentrated demand created by the different book clubs. The running of these clubs is an expensive matter and they have to offer substantial inducements in the way of free books to their subscribers. The result is that their "choices" are mainly limited to books which have a very wide appeal. This limitation is not absolute. The American reading public is "culture conscious", and will therefore tolerate a few "highbrow" or "special" books (e.g., *The Heart of the Matter* and *1984*) among the mass of merely commercial fiction offered them by the clubs. The exceptions, however, prove the rule.

THE immense rewards accruing to the authors of book club "choices" has inevitably stimulated the production of long, highly coloured picaresque novels palpably designed for the book club market, and the book clubs have in this way left their mark on the whole American publishing industry.

Nothing quite like this can happen here because the British book clubs are not allowed to offer new books to the public at less than the published price. The membership of our book clubs is therefore comparatively small. The British publishers' need for best-sellers is, however, hardly less than it is in the United States and there is thus an increasing tendency to concentrate advertising and publicity on a limited number of titles. This tendency is reinforced by the severe limitation on the advertising space available to publishers. The cure should be to publish fewer books, but it is not a remedy open to any individual publisher, acting by himself.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

THE PARADIGM

OUTSIDE our dream and nightmare
No being have the shapes
That fever us with glory
Or tempt us to despair:
The towered shining landscapes,
The bogs of suck and slime,
No substance have, no story
Of hideous or sublime.

The lily and the nightshade
Begotten of earth's crust,
And yew that delves no lower
Than sexton may with spade,
Together in mad upthrust
Towards their ceiling climb
To hang in Space a flower
That has no root in Time.

Yet through our dream and nightmare
From nothingness they fall,
In mind's dark generation
Memorial to share
The images ancestral
Which flare-lit from our prime
Still anguish contemplation
With Eden's paradigm.

G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON.

THE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE IN HOUSING

By DEREK WALKER-SMITH*

A TIME of adversity should clearly be a time of opportunity. The Government, however, has signally failed to seize the opportunity afforded them by the necessity for capital cuts to review and revise their housing policy. In consequence, the events of the autumn have served only to accentuate the Government's failure. It is not only that there has been a cut in the already inadequate figure of houses for construction. It has brought into relief the lack of imagination and the rigidity of approach which characterizes the Government's handling of this vital social question.

Of course, in a situation where after four and a half years of Socialism, large scale economic retrenchment became necessary, it was inevitable that housing should come under review. This was made necessary by reason of the astonishing increase which the post-war years have brought in the cost of housing and the burden that it imposes on the nation's finances. This being so, what considerations should have weighed with the Government in making their review? I think that two considerations should have stood out. First, there was the obvious need for economy and retrenchment; and secondly, the Government should have realized that any appreciable cut in the number of houses built would be likely to be a considerable disincentive to economic effort as well as a brake on social progress.

WHAT was the proper conclusion to be drawn from these two factors? In my view the clear and only proper conclusion was, so far as possible, that economies in housing should take the form of reducing the cost of houses rather than the number of houses to be built. It has been obvious for a long time that in the matter of housing the nation is not getting full value for money, and it is equally obvious that the less money one has the more vital it is to get value for it. There was, therefore, a clear duty on the Government to examine the housing situation afresh in the light of the new circumstances. There is no evidence that this was done. On the contrary, there is every indication that it was not done, and that a rule of thumb decision was arrived at. The decision in reality was to reduce the housing programme, but to pretend that it does not matter very much by making the whole reduction fall on private building. The absurdity of this contention hardly needs to be stated. As there is now no Statutory or other limitation of Council houses to members of the working classes, every disappointed applicant for a private building licence will automatically swell the waiting lists for Council houses. The result will be that all these people, though willing to house themselves at their own expense, will involuntarily make their housing a charge on the taxpayer and the ratepayer. The resulting situation is, of course, full of paradox, just as it seems very paradoxical to try to achieve economy in housing by increasing the proportion of the costlier form of building at the expense of the more economical.

These brilliant recommendations bear, of course, the authentic stamp of the genius of the Minister of Health. Indeed, it is obviously impossible to exclude the personal factor from any analysis of the present position. It does not take much political acumen to

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* *Mr. Derek Walker-Smith is Conservative Member of Parliament for Hertford Division.*

realize that an attack on the housing programme in any other form than a total sacrifice of private building might have led to an open breach with Mr. Bevan. The effect of the cuts was to force him to eat his own words in regard to the National Health Service; and any second eating of his own words would have seemed too much like being forced to eat humble pie. In effect, therefore, the Government's decision has meant that they prefer to lose houses than to lose the Minister of Health—a preference which I feel would hardly be reflected in a referendum of the nation.

The real trouble is that there has been little, if any, fresh thinking by the Government about housing since 1945. Mr. Bevan has been content to argue that the figures show that he is doing very well; and in so far as he is not doing very well, that he is doing better than the Tories, as well as the labour and material situation allows, and as well as can be done having regard to the over-riding social purpose of the provision of houses for letting to those in need of them.

ALL these arguments had begun to wear pretty thin even before the housing cut in October. The real test of the adequacy and efficiency of a housing programme must be related to the two factors of need and potential capacity. The criterion of need is only satisfied if the right sort of houses are built in sufficient numbers at reasonable cost; and the criterion of capacity is only satisfied if the maximum of materials and labour are made available, compatible with the nation's requirements and commitments in other vital fields, and further, if the best possible use is made of the labour and materials so as to achieve speedy and economical house construction.

By both these tests the Government had failed or was failing even before October. The most obvious method of applying the first test is to look at the waiting lists of local authorities. This is a test by which for various reasons Mr. Bevan normally refuses to be judged. It is significant, however, that some of his back bench supporters, when free from the spell that his eloquence puts upon them in the House of Commons, realize only too clearly the importance of this test. They sometimes start working out how many years it will take at the present rate of progress to dissipate these waiting lists in the great cities. The results of such calculations are inevitably gloomy.

WHAT I call the Agincourt technique has become equally vulnerable. Mr. Bevan and his faithful followers have made much play in the last few years with the comparisons of his figures and the corresponding post-1918 figures. There were in fact, explanations for this comparison quite other than the suggested explanations of Mr. Bevan's superior technique. Mr. Bevan started operations on the basis of a building industry geared up to the highest peak of productivity in 1939, and kept ready for action by the work and forethought of the Coalition Government. Dr. Addison had no Governmental preparation to assist him, and inherited a building industry which had been at low ebb in 1914. No such explanations need, however, be sought for the present figures. If the comparison is to be applied to-day it must be applied to the position as it was in 1923. In the years 1923-1929, 1,151,000 houses were built in England and Wales. The total rate of completion over the next six years, on the figures given by Sir Stafford Cripps, will only be 170,000 a year. In other words, the comparision has ceased to be favourable to Mr. Bevan. In fact, the comparison is much less favourable than the bare figures suggest. In 1923 we were on an upward curve, whereas in 1949 we are on a downward curve. The figures of 1923-29 were themselves only preliminary to the great house-building figures of the 1930's. One hardly dares to contemplate what the post-1955 figures will be if Socialism is still in charge.

However disconcerting the figures may be

and however inadequate against the test of need, it remains true that housing can only have whatever maximum of materials and labour is compatible with the nation's requirements and commitments in other vital fields.

NOW, it is a fact that, in spite of the disappointing results, house building has enjoyed a higher proportion of the total resources available for building than pre-war. This means that the failure in housing is accentuated by the fact that concentration on it has involved the sacrifice of other buildings, such as schools, hospitals, shops, and so on, also necessary for the public need. In the words of the Economic Survey of 1949—that absurdly over optimistic document "there has been little building work for the Health Services—the bare minimum of improvements and renewals which could not be postponed."

It is very difficult for a Government to place the blame on factors such as materials and labour in a planned economy, since they assume responsibility for these matters. It is quite clear from the Girdwood Report and other evidence that the best use has evidently not been made of labour and materials. For example, in paragraph 103 of the Girdwood Report, we are told of an increase of 45 per cent in man hours required to carry out a given piece of work, and that this represents a decline of productivity of 31 per cent. A housing labour force equal to pre-war could only build half the number of houses built in 1938. It is clear that the best deployment of our resources cannot be made if men and materials are tied up unduly long in the erection of individual houses.

Similarly, the evidence of increasing cost is important not only financially but industrially, since cost is the index of efficiency. The fact that housing costs have almost trebled means that value is not being got for money, that there is an unsatisfactory result from the available resources, and that the social purpose of housing is in danger of defeat.

THE Government is, in fact, concerned with two aspects of house building. They are concerned with the construction of houses, which is an economic and a technical function, and they are concerned with the allocation of houses, which is an economic and social function. They have responsibilities under both these heads, and cannot properly shuffle off the one responsibility by accepting only the other.

So far as construction is concerned there is no doubt that, if allowed to operate in the way that allows it to deploy its proper technique, private enterprise is the better, quicker, and more economical agency of house production. Local Authority housing is done by a different process, that of contract building. Now the machinery of contract building is not in its nature suitable for housing work. It is suitable for lump sum contracts such as the construction of a factory, cinema, or a school. Private enterprise building, or building to private account, is suitable for large-scale repetitive work such as housing. The difference of the two techniques is really the difference between the work of a shipyard and the work, for example, of Ford's Motor Works.

IT is impossible in a short article to analyse in detail the defects of local authority contract building. Shortly, however, they consist, in large part, of over specification, too great a divergency of forms of contract, the unaccustomed complexities of bills of quantities and tendering, with an elaborate system of accounting, many of which processes lie outside the ordinary experience of house builders.

There is in my experience little if any doubt amongst those conversant with those matters, that the rhythm of house-building production is at its best and most economical under private enterprise on a large scale. Of course, this superiority in construction does not dispose of the question. It may be argued that these practical and economical considerations must be secondary to the social consideration

of the allocation of houses. Here the principle was once defined by Mr. Bevan as being "the provision of houses at reasonable rent to those who need them". But this social purpose is necessarily itself dependent on social needs. There is, for example, no social advantage in houses for rent as against houses for ownership unless they are cheaper. If it is more expensive to rent a house than it was pre-war to buy one on mortgage, where is the advantage? If rents are too high it is clear that those who need them are not in a position to rent them any more than they would be to buy them. The effect of increasing costs on rents can be seen when it is realized that every £100 on the costs adds something like 1s. 6d. a week to the rent.

THE situation has now resolved itself to this dilemma, which, incidentally, I prophesied in the House of Commons as long ago as the summer of 1946: increasing cost must either be added to the rent, which the tenant cannot afford, or to the rate or tax subsidy which the nation cannot afford. In other words, the social purpose of housing can only be met if there is an improvement in the technical and economical aspect of construction.

In these difficult circumstances it seems to me that there was a clear duty on the Government. Their duty was to get the maximum possible economy with the least possible hardship by way of deprivation of actual housing accommodation. In more precise terms their duty was to say how far the nation could get the economical advantage of the superior technique of private enterprise building, and its helpful presence as a pacemaker, without abandoning the social purpose of providing houses in accordance with need. This is the task that Mr. Bevan has consistently refused to shoulder. I have always believed that it is possible to achieve this synthesis, and indeed, that it may not be very difficult. For example, powers already exist to impose on the licence, under the Defence Regulations and the Building Materials and Housing Act, 1945, conditions as to the disposal of houses. A house once let comes within the protection of the Rent Acts and new houses can also have their reasonable rent fixed by Rent Tribunals under the Landlord and Tenant (Rent Control) Act, 1949. These are patchwork powers already existing; but the Government does not appear to have even considered their use in solving the problem of improving the economic basis of housing without abandoning the social purpose of allocation in accordance with need.

I do not recommend, and have never recommended, any mere patchwork approach such as this. What is required is a review of the whole problem, with this object in view, designed to secure for the social purposes of housing the highest technical and economical efficiency. It is only by so doing that there is any real possibility of reducing housing costs and increasing housing production. It is the condition of advance and progress. Failure even to recognize, let alone to solve, this problem in four and a half years is the measure of the failure of the present Government in the vital task of housing.

BRITISH RELATIONS WITH SPAIN

By TUFTON BEAMISH *

BRITISH relations with Spain since the war ended have been vitiated by a fog of muddled thinking in the shape of irrelevancies and contradictions which have bemused the mind of the public. Our relations with a foreign country are, or should be, dictated by our own interests and our loyalty to our international obligations. We do not have an ambassador in Russia or Mexico in order to please the Russians or the Mexicans, but because our security and our welfare demand our proper representation.

We are not influenced in making up our minds, or should not be, by the amount of freedom that the Soviet Government allows to its citizens or by the undemocratic methods that the Mexicans may or may not employ in their elections or in the administration of justice. British interests demand the presence of a British representative.

"SPAIN is a dictatorship, so we should not be represented by an ambassador," say the Socialists and their Marxist twins, the Communists. Of course, Spain is a dictatorship. But it is a dictatorship with a difference. General Franco came to power because he enjoyed the majority support of Spaniards who saw—and had tasted—only one alternative: a Communist dictatorship under the direct orders of the Kremlin.

If neither side in the Civil War had received any form of foreign aid, Franco would undoubtedly have won and won possibly even earlier than he did. Furthermore, it is now clear that Franco, while he was ready and anxious for Italian and German help during the Civil War, was first and foremost a Spaniard and not prepared in any circumstances to take his orders from abroad. He is still of the same way of thinking. Franco outwitted Hitler from the first day of the war to the last, and in Spanish eyes his greatest achievement after winning the Civil War has been his success in keeping Spain out of the world war. Franco, therefore, is a proud national dictator who came to power backed by the majority of his countrymen. Nobody could say this about Stalin or Beirut or Gottwald or Rakosi or about the real bosses in Rumania or Bulgaria, though all these people are dictators in countries where His Majesty's Government has full diplomatic representation.

THE Monarchists, who are many, are divided and somewhat circumscribed. Many openly support Franco and hope for a restoration under his aegis. Their hopes received a temporary setback two months ago, when Don Juan apparently refused to see the Spanish Dictator in Portugal on grounds of "etiquette". One cannot help remarking the freedom allowed to Monarchists even in the Press, and this freedom is surely an indication that one day a compromise will be reached. Don Juan has openly criticized certain aspects of the Spanish regime, notably in the Lausanne Manifesto of March, 1945. In September, when Don Juan met Franco at sea, no statements were issued, but his son, the Prince of Asturias, aged 12, went to school in Madrid. Just before this meeting a referendum widely criticized as having been unfairly conducted had confirmed Franco as the head of the State but looked forward to the restoration of the Monarchy in certain circumstances.

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The so-called "Government-in-exile" has ceased to interest Spaniards in Spain. Señor Giral played into Franco's hands when he boasted openly of his direct connections with subversive elements sent into Spain to commit acts of sabotage, and for too long have the *émigrés* maintained close ties with the Communists working, of course, on Kremlin orders. When the "acting President of the Republic" spoke recently of "preserving legal continuity with the last government constitutionally elected in Spain", he was cutting no Spanish ice.

A DICTATORSHIP—yes, but what freedom compared with the countries I have visited behind the Iron Curtain. I had no difficulty in visiting Spain, although I have always been strongly critical of many aspects of the regime, but I have twice recently been refused a visa to go to the Soviet Union. In Spain I was accorded complete freedom to go where I wished and to meet whom I wished. Nobody in Spain was frightened to meet me and all whom I met talked quite freely, although it would have been too much to expect them to be too critical of the regime in public. That is something which nobody living in a dictatorship cares to do. There were none of those over-the-shoulder glances, lest one was overheard even by a friend, which I had found one of the most frightening aspects of the Eastern Europe Marxist Police States.

In spite of all their difficulties, I think that the majority of Spaniards are more content, and in small ways better off than they have ever been before. They are sick of politics and sick of war, and it will be several decades before the ghastly memories of the Civil War are smoothed away. In some ways, it is amazing that the scars have healed so quickly.

As Pedro Calderón wrote three hundred years ago:

> "Though full of change I will confess,
> No good there is but might be less,
> No ill but worse might be."

"SPAIN supported the Axis during the War," say the Socialists, "so she should now be cold-shouldered." Certainly she supported the Axis. The Blue Division and the Blue Squadron composed entirely of volunteers, fought on the Russian front with great tenacity. For that matter, Spain gave the Allies considerable help as well.

Sixty thousand Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen were helped to escape through Spain to North Africa. The North African invasion might not have been possible without Spain's benevolent neutrality. Franco's cunning probably stopped Hitler from moving on Gibraltar in February, 1941—as Hitler told Mussolini. Supposing, incidentally, that our Socialist party had seen their dreams come true in 1938 and Franco had lost the Civil War. Would the Communists, who would undoubtedly have seized power, have been willing or able to resist the joint pressure of Germany and Russia during the first eighteen months of the war? Six times as many Ukrainians fought on the Axis side under General Vlasov as fought for the Axis in the Blue Division. Yet to-day the Ukraine, which by its constitution has practically no say in its own foreign policy, is a member of the United Nations. Who will accurately balance Franco's wartime balance sheet? And what if someone could? Like the dictatorship argument, all this is little relevant to the question of British-Spanish relations.

. . . . . .

Two major matters must always help to influence our relations with any foreign country—trade and defence.

THE only country in Europe, excluding the Soviet Union, to which Marshall Aid has not been offered is Spain. Yet the Harriman Committee stated: "While this committee firmly believes that the American system of free enterprise is the best method of obtaining high productivity, it does not believe that any foreign aid programme should be used as a means of requiring other countries to adopt it. The imposition of any

such conditions would constitute an unwarranted interference with the affairs of friendly nations," and according to a Socialist Party publication *European Co-operation within the Framework of the Recovery Programme*, "the Programme remains open for any of the East European countries to enter whenever they are prepared to accept its purposes. . . . It remains based on the assumption that Europe is an economic unity and that trade between East and West should increase steadily throughout the period."

Spanish economic difficulties were bound to be grave after the devastation and demoralisation of the Civil War followed by the near isolation of the 1939-45 War. Supposing the cost of living based on the cost of food, clothing, housing, housekeeping and general expenses in July, 1936 (just before the Civil War), was 100; it had reached 178 in 1940, 275 in 1945, and 475 by June, 1949, and it is still steadily going up every month. As the cost of living has gone up, so has the population. There are now over 28 million people in Spain—five million more than in 1932. And this, in spite of the death of maybe 1,000,000 Spaniards during the Civil War. By 1975 Spain's population should be 33 million. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that there is heavy, though partially concealed, unemployment in the country. A good mule costs about £400 and even a donkey over £100. Luxuries are something to look at in posh shops. Spain's economy is in a very critical state indeed.

BEFORE the Civil War Spain produced about 5 million tons of cereals each year and was not only normally self-supporting, but sometimes more than 50 per cent of her exports consisted of cereals. By 1939 cereal production was halved. In 1948 the crop was the poorest since 1898, being only about 40 per cent of the average crop of the 'twenties. Now, therefore, up to half of Spain's grain requirements have to be imported. Two years of severe drought have made things worse. Agricultural machinery is desperately short and, worse still, so are fertilizers. Of the latter Spain imported 600,000 tons of her total requirements of 1½ million tons in 1935. In 1946 less than 300,000 tons were used. There is no longer a serious world shortage of fertilizers, but Spain must still go short.

Agriculture, in fact, is at a very low ebb. Inflation is almost out of hand, the hydro-electric system is overworked and badly in need of replacements and extensions, and power cuts and shortage of coal and raw materials have forced factories into idleness, while men remain on the pay roll by law. Housing demands vastly outstrip supply. Road and rail transport is on its last legs. A 1931 Baby Austin would have cost me £600 last September in Avila. To travel by train is to risk life and limb because of the shocking state of the permanent way. Port equipment is antiquated and inadequate. Vital and ambitious irrigation schemes are held up for lack of raw materials.

If Spain is to take her place in international trade and thus contribute to other countries' prosperity as well as her own, she must have the same sort of help with her foreign exchange problems as has been given to the sixteen countries enjoying Marshall Aid. Assistance so far given has done little more than whet the Spanish appetite and underline the fact that Spain has been singled out for ostracism. The free flow of trade between Spain and the United Kingdom has been much interfered with since 1945. But in spite of this, very considerable progress has been made. In 1945 total exports to the United Kingdom from Spain including the Canary Islands and Spanish ports in North Africa were valued at less than £16 million. But in 1948 exports from Spain to the United Kingdom were exactly double this figure, and included fresh fruit and vegetables to the value of £21 million and badly needed iron ore and scrap to the value of nearly £3½ million. Exports from the United Kingdom to Spain were valued at £2½ million in 1945 and at £14 million in 1948. But Spain's lack of

foreign exchange is still keeping out of the Spanish market many British goods, such as textiles, hardware, cutlery and foodstuffs traditionally exported to Spain.

Trade has been much complicated by the special exchange rates for both exports and imports which were agreed in the Anglo-Spanish talks at the end of 1948 and replaced the surcharge system under which Spanish exports received a 30 per cent Government subsidy. New trade talks with Spain have recently been concluded and there is reason to believe that these will result in an increased exchange of trade between the two countries. Many British industrialists with intimate knowledge of the Spanish market consider that trade between Spain and the United Kingdom could be doubled as soon as it is removed from the sphere of party politics. A Glasgow firm has recently agreed to provide locomotives to the approximate value of £3 million and this large contract could easily be the forerunner of others equally important.

THE discovery of the atom bomb and the consequent need for dispersal has surely increased the strategic importance of the Iberian Peninsula. If Russia decides on war as the best method of achieving her often avowed intention of dominating the world, what will be Spain's attitude? Some say that a neutral Spain would be a great asset. Others think otherwise. But Spain, as her Foreign Minister reminded me, was the first country to resist the Marxist plan for world domination and Spanish hatred for all things Communist is plain for all to see. Spain could not stand aside from a conflict if by so doing the Communists came nearer to achieving their ambitions.

Spain links Europe and Africa. Nobody can claim that the defence of Western Europe is assured against physical Russian military aggression as yet. Supposing, though, that the Russians were halted where the Iron Curtain now hangs: would the Iberian Peninsula be unimportant? But supposing at the worst, that the Russians occupied the Channel ports after, say, two months' fighting; would the Iberian Peninsula be more important? Is Spain perhaps the natural reserve area for the defence of Western Union.

THE Atlantic Pact is so far a defensive pact against the expansion of the Soviet Empire in Europe. Portugal is a member of the Atlantic Pact, but Spain is not. Dr. Salazar, the Portuguese Prime Minister, left nobody in doubt about his views on the exclusion of Spain when he used these words in a speech a few months ago: "Spain ought to be included in the Atlantic Pact, first, in view of the geographic and strategic gap which her absence represents, secondly by virtue of the real importance of the contribution of which she is capable, and lastly, because the practical value of Portugal's adhesion is itself affected by the question whether or no Spain is connected with the Pact, and in the case of her not being so connected, by the policy adopted should a conflict bring the Pact into operation. The full working of a Western front against the possibility of aggression is strongly conditioned by the existence in the Iberian Peninsula of policies directed to identical ends. Through good fortune or enlightened intention, the Pact is sufficiently elastic to adapt itself to more than one situation." Portugal is in any case closely linked with Spain by the Iberian Pact, and Franco emphasized this link when he visited Portugal for defence talks in October, thus drawing further attention to the illogical exclusion of his country.

The Spanish Army of 22 divisions (four in Spanish Morocco) has no modern equipment. The Navy, consisting of several cruisers and a sizeable force of destroyers, corvettes and submarines, has no asdic and no radar! The Air Force is insignificant in size and all aircraft are not only obsolete but hardly airworthy.

Are Spanish airports of no significance in the defence of Western Europe? Are Spanish ports such as Ferrol, Arosa Bay, Vigo and

Pontevedra, from which the British Navy did so much of its training until 1914, no longer of interest to us. What of Spanish road and rail communications which are some of the worst in Europe through lack of maintenance equipment? Are they of no importance?

The Americans have been no less guilty of political shortsightedness than we have been, and this was recently underlined when Admiral Conolly, commanding the American East Atlantic and Mediterranean Naval Forces, sailed into Ferrol in September with a force of two cruisers and two destroyers and paid a State visit to General Franco. It was an open secret that the State Department had only agreed to this under very heavy pressure and at the last minute. The visit was a great success and the Americans were given a rousing welcome by the Spaniards. Franco, son of a Naval officer who was once Commandant at Ferrol, with his elder brother Nicholas, a Captain in the Spanish Navy when the Civil War broke out, is said to have astonished his visitors by his wide knowledge of American Naval strategy during the Pacific battles against the Japanese. He has always been a student of military history and strategy. The American Charge d'Affaires was absent during these discussions. As for the British Prime Minister, rumour has it that he first heard of Admiral Conolly's visit when he read in *The Times* that it had already taken place.

FRANCO is nothing if he is not a realist. He showed this when his Foreign Minister, answering in 1943 a memorandum from Lord Templewood, used these words: "If events develop in the future as they have done up to now, it would be Russia which will penetrate deeply into German territory. And we ask the question: If this should occur, which is the greater danger, not only for the Continent, but for England herself, a Germany not totally defeated and with sufficient strength to serve as a rampart against Communism, a Germany hated by all her neighbours, which would deprive her of authority though she remained intact, or a Sovietized Germany, which would certainly furnish Russia with the added strength of her war preparations, her engineers, her specialized workmen and technicians." In contrast to this, Lord Templewood had written to Franco in February, 1943, that his fears were "without reason or cause", and he went on to say: "I cannot accept the thesis that there exists a Russian danger for post-war Europe. Neither can I accept the idea that Russia will launch out, at the end of the war, on an anti-European policy."

In May, 1944, Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons expressed the hope that Spain would be a strong influence for peace in the Mediterranean after the war, and said: "Internal politics in Spain are a matter for the Spaniards themselves. It is not for us—that is the Government—to meddle in such affairs." In October, 1944, General Franco addressed a letter to the Duke of Alba, the Spanish Ambassador to Britain, in which he spoke of the bad faith of Communist Russia and the "insidious power of Bolshevism". " . . . We must take account," he said, "of the fact that the weakening or destruction of her neighbours will greatly increase Russia's ambition and powers, making necessary more than ever an intelligent and understanding attitude on the part of the Western countries." After stipulating the very real differences which kept Spain and Britain apart, he said, " . . . None the less, it is desirable that we should work to make our relations more intimate and prepare for possible common action in the future."

MR. CHURCHILL'S reply refuted Franco's analysis of the then strained relations and described the serious difficulties which still hindered their improvement. These included "the consistently hostile activities of the Falangist Party and the close relationship that this party had maintained with the Nazis and with the Italian Fascists".

None the less, the British Prime Minister

looked forward to the removal of all obstacles in the way of cordial relations, although at the same time saying that it was out of the question that His Majesty's Government should support Spanish aspirations to participate in the peace settlements and improbable that Spain would be invited to join the future world organization. These sentiments were very proper and undoubtedly echoed British opinion of all parties at that time. Franco had been somewhat naïve and had been too quick off the mark.

At Potsdam in August, 1945, Mr. Attlee subscribed to the view that the Spanish Government should not be invited to become a member of the United Nations "having been founded with the support of the Axis powers . . . (and) in view of its origins, its nature, its record and its close association with the aggressor states". Very few people remarked at the time how this attitude was contradictory to the terms of the Atlantic Charter. Mr. Attlee still had public opinion behind him, even though logic was not on his side.

The reaction of the Spanish Government to the Potsdam reference to Spain was to reject it as "arbitrary and unjust".

IN April, 1946, the Security Council discussed a Polish motion ruling that the Spanish situation "endangered international peace and security". The accused party was not allowed to give evidence, but Señor Giral, then Premier of the Government-in-exile, presented evidence. A sub-committee of U.N.O. found the Franco regime to be a "potential menace" to peace and security but not an "existing threat", and recommended to the Security Council through the Assembly that unless the Franco regime was withdrawn and other conditions of political freedom were met, the Assembly should call on the 51 members of the United Nations to break off diplomatic relations. This was not enough for M. Gromyko, who threatened the veto if no stronger action was taken. This view of U.N.O. was opposed by Sir Alexander Cadogan for Great Britain on the grounds that there existed no clear threat to peace and that there were no legal grounds for collective severance of relations. Yet in December by 34 votes to 6, with 12 abstentions the Assembly passed a resolution barring Spain from all connections direct or indirect with U.N.O., threatening further action by the Security Council if Spain did not become a democracy in a "reasonable time", and recommending the recall of Ambassadors or Ministers from Madrid. To the surprise of many, Great Britain and the United States voted in favour of this resolution. The Spanish reaction was immediate and, even if a little pompous, was none the less a proud and true reflection of public opinion. ". . . National dignity," said the Spanish Government, "can never tolerate foreign nations interfering in the private affairs of Spain . . . and it is convinced that by this action it is rendering a service of the first order to the cause of the free nations and to the international community itself."

In November, 1947, U.N.O. reaffirmed their attitude by 28 votes to 6, with 23 abstentions, Great Britain voting for the resolution and the United States abstaining. But since then, there has been a steady swing of opinion against the 1946 action, and by May, 1949, the vote in the General Assembly was 26 votes to 15 (with 16 abstentions) in favour of restoring normal diplomatic relations with Spain. But as this just failed to receive the necessary two-thirds majority, the position remained and remains unchanged.

MEANWHILE, in the British Parliament, woolly statements and contradictions from the Socialist benches punctuated the already confused situation. "We detest the regime," said Mr. Bevin in December, 1945. "I am sure that we have to take action which will be best calculated to make the Spaniards get rid of their present government, and also get a decent Government in its place," said Mr. Attlee in June, 1946.

Yet, four months later he directly contradicted himself when he said: "It is . . . suggested that intervention in Spain, or direct action by economic sanctions or by the withdrawal of Ambassadors would bring about the result which we all desire—a change of regime. . . . All the evidence at my disposal points to the opposite conclusion—that external intervention will only strengthen General Franco—a very deplorable result."

"ALL of us would like to see Spain not ostracized but part of the community of nations; but Franco must go first, as has repeatedly been stated by His Majesty's Government," said Mr. Mayhew in May, 1948, three months after one of his own supporters, Mr. McKay, M.P., had described the Government's attitude to Spain as "unbalanced and rather ridiculous".

United Nations interference in Spain's internal affairs cannot be justified by its constitution. Insult has been heaped upon injury for the Spanish Government by the invitation to the Government-in-exile to attend various United Nations bodies as, for example, to send a delegation to the recent U.N.E.S.C.O. Conference in Paris, where almost all members of the United Nations were represented. And, as if this were not enough, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, of all organizations, invited the Republicans to become members of the organization, and Republican delegates used the recent 32 nation conference in Stockholm to make bitter and unreasoned attacks on the Franco regime.

IT must surely be our active concern to repair the damage that has been done to British interests while sloppy slipshod Socialism has befogged our sense of proportion. To be wise after the event and criticize Lord Templewood, Mr. Churchill or Mr. Attlee for the views they expressed during the heat and strain of the war or immediately after it, would be to condemn them for being loyal to our ally, Russia. But apart from a small section of the Conservative Party which never ceased to warn against Russia's real intentions and ambitions, no voices were raised against these genuine and praiseworthy attempts to make a world organization work. We were right to make the great efforts that we did.

The crime of the Socialists was not so much that they were guilty of wishful thinking as that they have consistently refused to admit that our high hopes have been sabotaged, week in week out, by the Soviet Union and her East European dependencies. Why else, inspired by Mr. Churchill, has the Council of Europe been formed with such an auspicious beginning? And why else such half-hearted Socialist support?

Spain, I think, has no place at present in the Council of Europe, which is and will probably remain an exclusive club. Spain's admission to the United Nations is an academic question, since Russia would veto any such suggestion, even though her inclusion has much more to be said for it than the continued membership of Russia or Czechoslovakia. But Spain's admission to the United Nations' specialized agencies such as U.N.E.S.C.O. and F.A.O. should not be any longer delayed.

WE should, without a shadow of a doubt, admit the mistake we made in withdrawing our Ambassador from Madrid against our better judgment, and we should take the initiative in this matter instead of allowing such countries as Paraguay, Haiti and Liberia to dictate British foreign policy, as Mr. Bevin says he intends by abstaining from voting on this issue. For the country most affected by this issue not to have any views upon it is incongruous and foolish. And how odd it is to think that we had an Ambassador in Spain when that country was actively helping the Axis during the war. So why not now?

As for the Atlantic Pact, who will deny the truth and logic of Franco's views expressed some six months ago. "Spain," he said, "is an Atlantic nation. We cannot alter the laws

of geography. Limitations to the understanding of nations will not start from our side, but we cannot fail to put as a first condition to our collaboration the right to govern ourselves as we wish."

SPAIN'S place in Western Union is a matter to be discussed by the countries concerned after her place in the Atlantic Pact has been discussed. Defence is Defence. Logic and truth must outweigh party political prejudice. British security cannot be indefinitely jeopardized by Mr. Attlee's fear of splitting his Party and by his own and his Party's discreditable record during the Spanish Civil War.

The offer of Marshall Aid to Spain is purely a matter for the United States Government, but there are healthy signs that leaders of American opinion have now realized that Spain cannot be coerced or starved into becoming a democracy—a commonly held view which fails to take into account that democracy on the British or American pattern cannot be superimposed on a country merely by waving one's hand.

In short, British policy—and American policy—towards Spain in 1945 was illogical but understandable and even excusable. But by 1946 it should have been crystal clear not only that we had blundered in international law but in equity and psychology. Will the Socialists now take early steps to regain the ground we have lost and to return to a sane British foreign policy, or will our relations with Spain continue to be governed by the constant fear of splitting apart the Marxists and the Christians in the Socialist Party? Mr. Attlee has seen all the Socialist Parties split behind the Iron Curtain as well as the Socialists in Italy and Finland. With the election looming, it is not hard to guess the answer.

EPITAPH ON 1949

A CENTURY ago, if men fell sick,
Tricking themselves they bore God's name and manner,
They were confined apart, as lunatic.
To-day they rule us, with the term of planner.

W. A. B. GARDENER.

SUGAR REFINING AND NATIONALIZATION

Br PETER RUNGE

THE first indication—apart from certain subterranean Fabian rumblings—that sugar was among the industries which the Socialist Party intended to nationalize, if returned to power in 1950, was given in two paragraphs of "Labour Believes in Britain". Before the publication of this pamphlet there had not been, as might perhaps have been expected, visits by Government working parties to sugar factories and refineries; there had not been, as might perhaps have been intelligible, discussions with leading refiners; nor had there been any demand for such a measure on the part of the trade union leaders representing the majority of workers in the refining industry. The proposal, therefore, came apparently out of the blue, and without prior investigation into the advisability of such a step; or as John Cleveland said of Stafford's execution, "huddled up twixt fit and just".

A glance at the paragraphs concerned will show just how little thought had been given to the question. Here they are, *verbatim* :—

"*The Sugar Monopoly.*

"The privately owned British Sugar Corporation, Ltd., with a monopoly in sugar beet manufacture, was set up by a Conservative Government. The legislation creating the monopoly will expire early in the next Parliament. Labour will not leave this monopoly in private ownership.

"Sugar refining is also controlled by a State-protected private monopoly which has enabled large profits to be made for private shareholders. One concern dominates the British sugar industry; it also has large interests in some of the colonial territories which the Labour Government is pledged to develop. The sugar industry is vital both in peace and war. Labour intends to transfer to public ownership all the sugar manufacturing and refining concerns."

It will be seen that two major charges are made against the refiners; one that sugar refining is a monopoly, the other that the refining industry and one particular concern, pay large profits to shareholders. Moreover, the wording of the "indictment" is such as to imply that by being "State protected", sugar refiners are subsidized by the Government.

LET us examine these charges, not one of which can be supported.

The word monopoly is generally taken to mean exclusive control of the supply of a particular commodity, in such a way as to enable the person or persons having this control to raise the price of the commodity above the price fixed by free competition. By such a standard there is no monopoly in the sugar industry. One large concern, Tate & Lyle Ltd., does in fact, refine 53 per cent of the sugar consumed in Great Britain, but the remainder is produced by the Government-controlled British Sugar Corporation (which runs the factories at which sugar is extracted from home-grown beet), and by several other smaller concerns, or is imported for direct consumption. The B.S.C. alone produces about 23 per cent of the sugar consumed in Great Britain. Competition, therefore, exists, and the price must therefore be subject to its effects.

A kind of specious appearance of monopoly has existed since 1939 by reason of a war-time control—prolonged by the present Government, whereby refined sugar is "zoned" in such a way that in some areas only Tate & Lyle sugar can be obtained. This cuts out competition in some regions, but it is a

Government restriction, not a Refiners' device.

To give the lie to accusations of monopoly on the part of a particular concern, it is worth pointing out, in conclusion, that sugar refining has never been subjected to examination under the Monopolies Commission. It would have been fairer if the Socialists, before bandying the word loosely about, had first made sure of the facts.

AS for profits, it is perfectly true that the sugar refiners make profits—even handsome profits. But unless the making of a profit is now to be regarded as one of the Seven Deadly Sins—and presumably the making of a loss (e.g., by the Transport Commission or B.E.A.) as one of the Seven Lively Virtues—it cannot be conceded that this is sufficient reason for the industry to be nationalized. If that were the case, since profits are a measure of efficiency, what efficient industry in Britain can hope to escape the nationalizer's net? Let us just examine the extent of the profits distributed by one firm, Tate & Lyle, to their shareholders. As has been pointed out on many occasions, these amount to *one-seventh of a farthing per packet of sugar*. On the basis of present-day consumption, if these profits were handed over to the consumer they would amount to 3d. per annum per capitum of the population. As against these *distributed* profits, it must, furthermore, be remembered that something like two and a half times the amount distributed to shareholders is ploughed back annually into the business, to build new buildings, to install new plant, and to provide unexampled employee services such as cheap meals, sickness benefits and non-contributory pensions.

THE only 'protection' received by Britain's sugar refiners is a differential between the duties on imported refined and raw sugar of ¼d. per lb. in favour of the former. This was imposed by Mr. Winston Churchill in 1928 in order to prevent the dumping of foreign subsidized refined sugar at below world prices; a procedure which, if continued, would have led to considerable unemployment in the industry, without guaranteeing low-priced sugar to the consumer. It can hardly be supposed, even by Socialists, that foreign dumping with its dire consequences, is desirable.

There are, of course, many subsidies incident on sugar, but it can be firmly denied that any of these are paid to the refiners. Here are the two most important ones:—

(i) A subsidy is paid to the British Sugar Corporation for the production of beet sugar. The Corporation makes a considerable loss, which is in part borne by the Treasury, and in part by a *compulsory levy extracted from the refiners.*

(ii) The British housewife buys her sugar at 5d. per lb., which is about 1d. per lb. *below* the world price. If however, she buys sweets or jams or other products in which sugar is used, she buys the sugar content at the price paid by manufacturing users of sugar, 7d. per lb.—1d. per lb. *above* the world price. As the amount of sugar she uses as sugar and the amount she buys in manufactured goods are approximately equal, she is thus unwittingly paying for her own subsidy. Moreover, as, in any case, she is paying a duty of 1d. per lb. on her sugar, and this amounts, for the whole country to £20,000,000 per year, it will be seen that she is also paying, on her sugar, enough to cover the loss made by State transport, or enough to keep the Central Office of Information going, with £4,000,000 to spare.

OTHER unofficial reasons for the nationalization of sugar which are at present being bandied about by Socialists are (*a*) that the refiners are inefficient and (*b*) (an old party cry) that "the workers in the industry want it to be nationalized".

(*a*) The first of these is barely worth looking at, but should be answered. In fact, whereas other British industries send working parties to America to learn that peculiar quality called "know-how," Tate & Lyle, for example, receive visits from refiners all over the world, including the United States, coming to gather technological information. They also lend a technologist to American sugar refiners, and thus earn dollars by providing technical assistance. British refined sugar is still produced at a lower margin of cost than any other in the world.

(*b*) It is a pity that before sedulously spreading false statements as to what the workers in the industry want, the Socialists did not send a working party to find out. In fact, the workers want to be left as they are. If anyone is in doubt, let him get hold of a copy of a recording made by Richard Dimbleby, who visited one of the Tate & Lyle refineries in July, 1949, and asked at random for comments from the workers. It proved impossible to find a single one who was in favour of nationalization of sugar refining. Trade Union delegates, shop stewards, foremen, rank and file, all gave their opinions; and all were solidly opposed to it.

IT is in such a slipshod and careless manner that the Socialists prepare their "plans" to ruin a thriving industry. No prior investigation. No consultation with anyone connected with the industry; directors, managers, brokers, trade union officials or workers. Any sort of enquiry refused.

By contrast, when the question arose of the public ownership of the sugar factories in Antigua and St. Kitts, in the Leeward Islands —factories which produce only a minute amount of sugar by comparison with that refined in Britain—the Government deemed it necessary to send a Commission to investigate. Perhaps it was the findings of that Commission which prompted Socialist caution or pusillanimity *vis-à-vis* the sugar refining industry in Britain. For the Commission affirmed that no case had been made out for nationalization.

Perhaps it was for this reason that Mr. Morrison refused to meet the sugar refiners and discuss the question with them. Perhaps it was for this reason that, four months *after* the publication of "Labour Believes in Britain" the first and only delegation of Labour M.P's visited Tate & Lyle's refineries.

THE SPEAKER'S HANDBOOK claims to give chapter and verse for the nationalization of sugar. Its various arguments are being answered in detail elsewhere, but some of the howlers it perpetrates are worth refuting here.

(1) Throughout the section, the *leitmotif* is a dirge in B Flat Minor on Monopoly. This has been dealt with above. But if monopoly is so heinous a sin, why introduce a State monopoly into an industry where there is at present competition?

(2) It is implied that the reduced duty of ¼d. per lb. on raw sugar as compared with refined was introduced to preserve the refiners from competition on the part of beet sugar factories. It was, of course, a legitimate measure designed to prevent foreign dumping of refined sugar, and protects beet sugar factories and refiners alike.

(3) In one part of the handbook the refiners are accused of reducing prices in such a way as to put the beet factories out of business. (Though, why a reduction in price should be any cause for complaint it is hard to see.) In another they are accused of dividing the trade amicably with the beet factories under the 1936 Sugar Reorganization Act. The refiners, in fact, *opposed* the division of the industry under the 1936 Act, and in this they were then supported by Messrs. A. V. Alexander, Alfred Barnes and Tom Williams.

(4) It is stated in the Labour Party *Speaker's Handbook* that the Co-operative Wholesale Society took shares in Tate & Lyle Ltd. in 1930 in order to protect the housewife from exploitation, and *because in order to carry out*

refining itself, it would have had to seek permission from the Sugar Commission.

The Sugar Commission was not created until 1936.

(5) It is stated that Tate & Lyle can exert a powerful influence in the British Sugar Corporation. Tate & Lyle have, in fact, *one* director on the Board of the British Sugar Corporation. However powerful he may be—and he is there primarily for his technical ability—he can be over-ruled by the veto of the Treasury-appointed Chairman, so his power is very limited.

(6) It is stated that Tate & Lyle have a large stake in the British Sugar Corporation. They have. But their capital pays them very much less than the levy which last year amounted to £250,000 and which they are forced, under the 1936 Sugar Reorganization Act, to contribute to the running of the Corporation.

(7) It is stated that the beet factories are prohibited from making syrup and speciality sugars. This is untrue. They only have to give six months' notice of their intention to do so, and they can do so.

(8) It is stated, with a reference to a reply by Dr. Edith Summerskill in the House of Commons on April 26th, 1949, that if sugar were nationalized, output of refined sugar could be increased by using the 6 out of 18 beet factories which produce no refined sugar during the off-season for beet.

Obviously the author of the handbook has not checked his reference. Dr. Summerskill stated categorically on the occasion referred to, that such an adaptation of the factories would be impracticable on grounds of expense alone.

(9) Mr. J. G. Mathieson, Chairman of the Sugar Using Manufacturers' Committee, is quoted as having said in 1937, that the "almost obsolete monopoly of refined sugar . . . operated to the advantage of comparatively few people . . . The British industry exploits it to the full. . . . Not only does (it) keep up the price of sugar to home consumers, but it . . . enables the manufacture of sugared products to be carried on abroad on a more favourable basis than at home."

That was in 1937. Mr. Mathieson has lately said he is opposed to the nationalization of sugar and sees no reason for it and can see no benefit to manufacturing users in the result. Moreover, all associations of manufacturing users of sugar, including the Cocoa, Chocolate and Confectionery Alliance and the Food Manufacturers' Federation, have passed resolutions condemning the proposal to nationalize sugar.

(10) The handbook skirts the question of Colonial sugar interests, and merely talks vaguely of "development in the interests of the Colonial peoples".

Mr. Bustamante, who speaks for the Jamaicans, has had something to say about this. He has said that he would look on the nationalization of the sugar industry as a disaster for the West Indies. It would not only drive foreign investments out of Jamaica, but it would debar prospective investors. He does not believe nationalization would benefit the Jamaican worker.

Presumably he has had an eye on recent developments in the region of Tanganyika.

TAKEN either in part or as a whole, then, the proposal to nationalize is a half-baked, ill-considered piece of idealogical nonsense, and the case for it a farrago of half-truths and untruths.

Presumably it was supposed, during the revels at Shanklin, that the leaders of the sugar industry would go quietly to the tumbril. They are not doing so. And now, when they protest, they are accused of conspiring against the "People's Government". What kind of a people, as someone remarked on a more famous occasion, do they think we are?

ETUDE :

THIS YEAR, NEXT YEAR, SOMETIME, NEVER

for N. MICHAEL BOYLE

THIS YEAR
when life springs budding from the bough
and all is joy to be so young and gay
and Time is hid away from such bright eyes
as it might be an ogre kept at bay
by such conspiring and such petty lies
as mothers know—that are the truths of mothers;
this, the first year of time; the eternal now,
hides from our glance the sorrowing glance of others
who in their griefs have all the past to fear.

NEXT YEAR
Oh how the darkening future looms
and draws across the sun such running shadows
that drag the hills up close and close around
those innocent fields of green to dark-barred meadows
and, frightened, we know Time leap in one swift bound
to lock us up in hours whose every chime
falls down the air heavy with fancied dooms
of frozen years cold in the ice of time
that through our rimmed lids may not let one tear.

SOMETIME
when locked in time as in a grave
we'll know at that last moment all of love
that through too many years we knew in part
yet could not know it whole; its soundness prove,
being so tricked by that false guide, the heart;
then and then only as the long hours fall
and round our rounded tombs the jackdaws rave
shall we see life, love, hate, and know it all
a little play to while away life's time.

NEVER
that's no time and all time in one,
is now and then, this year and next year too,
that's that vast limbo locked beyond our minds,
a place where this or that is false or true
only as fancy takes it and time finds;
Never's the only time when we shall know
what's at the bottom, when all's said and done,
of us and life and why it should be so
World without end, Amen, in time forever.

C. BUSBY SMITH.

NEW CRIMES FOR OLD SINS

By MARK JOLYON

MANKIND, having despaired of the age-old search for exciting, unknown sins, has turned its attention to the more fruitful work of inventing new crimes. The British Government, though lacking the revolutionary originality of its sister governments beyond the Veil, has not been behindhand in this important aspect of social progress. It has created thousands of crimes since the beginning of the war, and is now turning them out at a steady annual rate. It may fairly claim to have perfected that machinery which is still quaintly known as the Rule of Law. This machinery, though it does not contribute to the happiness or prosperity of the British people, is none the less very efficient. The average man cannot be expected to have an intimate knowledge of its details (technicalities must always be left to the experts), but it may amuse him now and again to take a glance at the legal sources, by virtue of which he may be fined more than he owns in all the world or sent to prison for life.

Let us take a typical instance of one of the more serious new crimes. Bert and Bill each own a car, and one Saturday morning Bert finds he has run out of petrol and asks Bill to lend him a gallon. Bill gives him a gallon in a can, and Bert drives off to his golf club. This is a bad business. Each of them has committed at least three offences against the Motor Fuel (Control) Order, 1948. For each of them has:

(1) either furnished or acquired a supply of motor fuel otherwise than from a supplier. Article 1(1), (a) and (b);

(2) either furnished or acquired a supply of motor fuel otherwise than against the surrender to the supplier at the time of supply of one or more coupons authorising the supply on the date of the supply of a quantity of motor fuel not less than the quantity supplied, each such coupon being a coupon on which any particulars or signature required in pursuance of the next following Article have been inserted as there provided, and on which (or, in the case of a standard ration coupon, on the cover of the book in which it was issued) there appears, if it authorises supply to a motor vehicle, a number or description applicable to the vehicle, or to the class to which the vehicle belongs. Article 1(1)(c);

(3) used or caused or allowed the use of motor fuel otherwise than against the surrender of a coupon or under the authority of a licence. Article 5(1).

THE position would have been still worse if (in an unguarded moment of generosity) Bill had given Bert one of his coupons. For each would then have committed the following six offences:

(1) used or caused or allowed the use of a coupon for a purpose other than that to which that coupon relates. 3(1)(a);

(2) used or caused or allowed the use of a coupon otherwise than in accordance with any condition or instruction appearing on that coupon. 3(1)(b);

(3) transferred a coupon to another person or accepted or been in possession of a coupon which is being, or has to his knowledge been, so transferred. 3(4);

(4) used or caused or allowed the use of motor fuel acquired against the surrender of a coupon for a purpose other than that to which that coupon relates. 5(2)(a);

(5) used or caused or allowed the use of motor fuel acquired against the surrender of a coupon otherwise than in accordance with any condition or instruction appearing on that coupon. 5(2)(b);

(6) used or caused or allowed the use of motor fuel acquired against the surrender of a coupon, where a coupon was acquired in respect of a particular motor vehicle, in any other motor vehicle. 5(2)(d).

Finally, if between them they have spilt any of the precious gallon, they would be guilty of wasting motor fuel contrary to Article 7.

Before you go off to the Stationery Office to buy a copy of the Order, let me warn you that it does not set out the penalties for disobeying it. It says nothing at all about penalties. It just says what you must and must not do. This is part of the mystique of delegated legislation.

THE Motor Fuel (Control) Order is one of hundreds of similar Orders made by Ministers under Regulation 55 of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939. These Regulations, made for defence in wartime, have proved even more effective in the battles of peace. They have enabled a rigid minority to inflict a social and economic revolution upon an apathetic country. The Regulations were originally made under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1939. The subsequent tinkering to which they have been subjected might provide political philosophers with a sermon in legislation.

Under the 1939 Act, His Majesty may by Order in Council make such Defence Regulations "as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for securing the public safety, the defence of the realm, the maintenance of public order and the efficient prosecution of any war in which His Majesty may be engaged, and for maintaining supplies and services essential to the life of the community". Without prejudice to the generality of these powers, "Defence Regulations may, so far as appears to His Majesty in Council to be necessary or expedient for any of (these) purposes make provision for the apprehension and punishment of offenders, authorise the taking of possession or control, on behalf of His Majesty, of any property or undertaking, authorise the acquisition, on behalf of his Majesty, of any property other than land, authorise the entering and search of any premises, and provide for amending any enactment, for suspending the operation of any enactment, and for applying any enactment with or without modification".

By the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1940, these powers were made to "include power by Order in Council to make such Defence Regulations making provision for requiring persons to place themselves, their services, and their property at the disposal of His Majesty, as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for securing (the purposes set out in the Act of 1939)".

AT the end of the war the infamous Regulation 18(b) and a few other Regulations were revoked, and some reactionary spirits hoped for an early return to normal life. But, although the Emergency Powers (Defence) Acts duly expired, many of the Defence Regulations have been kept in being by a series of Emergency Laws Acts; and still more, Regulation 55 among them, have been perpetuated by the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, 1945. This Act introduced the new technique of sleight of Statute. The Regulations, subject to such adaptations as might seem necessary or expedient, were now to "have effect for the purpose of so maintaining controlling and regulating supplies and services as:

(a) to secure a sufficiency of those essential to the well being of the community or their equitable distribution or their availability at fair prices; or

(b) to facilitate the demobilisation and resettlement of persons and to secure the orderly disposal of surplus material; or

(c) to facilitate the readjustment of industry and commerce to the requirements of the community in time of peace; or

(d) to assist the relief of suffering and the restoration and distribution of essential

supplies and services in any part of His Majesty's dominions or on foreign countries that are in grave distress as the result of war".

The Act also provides for the Regulations to which it applies to be varied in any manner which may seem necessary or expedient for the fulfilment of these modest purposes, and gives power to make new Defence Regulations for the control of prices.

This Act continues in force until December, 1950, and may be extended for a further year after that date. It was felt, however, that its terms did not give sufficient scope to the autocratic desires of Government, and there was passed accordingly the Supplies and Services (Extended Purposes) Act, 1947, which makes it absolutely plain that a large part of the rule of law so highly prized by our freedom-loving people is not subject to interpretation or interference at the hands of judges, magistrates or other evilly disposed persons. All the Regulations, and the Orders made under the Regulations, which have effect by virtue of the 1945 Act, are now "extended so as to be applicable for the following additional purposes, that is to say:

(a) for promoting the productivity of industry, commerce and agriculture;

(b) for fostering and directing exports and reducing imports, or imports of any classes, from all or any countries and for redressing the balance of trade; and

(c) generally for ensuring that the whole resources of the community are available for use, and are used, in a manner best calculated to serve the interests of the community".

THUS reassured about the legality of everything, we turn to Regulation 55, where we find a further series of noble purposes set forth with that pseudo-legal rhetoric which has become the fashionable camouflage of arbitrary power. This time it is the Minister who so far as it appears to him to be necessary (this expression is now always put in to exclude judicial review of Ministerial acts) for any of the purposes in the Acts referred to above "may by order provide:

(a) for regulating or prohibiting the production, treatment, keeping, storage, movement, transport, distribution, disposal, acquisition, use or consumption of articles of any description;

(b) for regulating the carrying on of any undertaking engaged in essential work;

(c) for any incidental and supplementary matters for which (he) thinks it expedient for the purposes of the order to provide";

and so on, and so on. If you skip the palaver and go straight to Paragraph 1(d), you will there see that any person guilty of an offence against this Regulation, and an offence is described as "a contravention of or failure to comply with any provision of an order", is liable on summary conviction to a fine of £500 or a treble penalty, whichever is the greater, and one year's imprisonment, and on conviction on indictment to £5,000 or a treble penalty, and fourteen years' imprisonment.

Poor Bert and Bill! That one coupon might cost you £30,000 fine as well as a little matter of seventy-four years in prison. You're not worried, you say, no Court would or could get away with anything unreasonable, no matter how clever a fellow may be at turning a single act into half a dozen crimes. Well, just wait and see: its easy to be pragmatic about the law, until you find yourselves in Court. No doubt in your case there is something to be said in mitigation, and you might be let off with a nominal fine of £5. But suppose you had bought that coupon from a man you met in your local (this has been known to happen), how will you feel when the prosecuting solicitor recites in open Court the maximum punishment to which you have rendered yourselves liable, and the Magistrate tells you how anti-social you are in these days of national shortage but, having regard to your

previous good characters, you will each have to pay only a fine of £100 and 10 guineas costs? And don't say that anyway you would never be found out giving a bit of petrol to a pal, because Inspectors armed with special powers of inspection by Defence Regulation 55AA and dozens of policemen are prowling night and day, seeking whom they may summones. (Hasn't your house been burgled yet?) And don't go away thinking you will only need to be careful about petrol, because it's much the same with a rasher of bacon or a pat of butter or (yet once more) a bar of chocolate, or, in truth, almost everything else.

LAW reform is the constant preoccupation of Parliament, and much is still being done to mitigate the last severities of the old criminal law. An attempt was made to abolish the death penalty for murder. (It has not yet been introduced for Black Market offences.) Penal Servitude has been abolished. (It is unfair to say that it has been transferred from the legal to the economic system.) Minor offences like plain honest theft, which carries a maximum of five years' imprisonment, are handled with the sympathetic understanding which is the achievement of modern education, and where possible the offenders are released on Probation. On the other hand, it must be admitted that many of the newer crimes have not been found amenable to liberal conceptions of the purpose of punishment. In the nineteenth century it was thought that the element of retribution was outmoded and unnecessary. The twentieth century is being obliged to jettison even the enlightened object of reformation. So sluggish is the evolution of the social mentality that the only sanction for many contemporary misdeeds is a fearsome deterrent. If only people would realize the seriousness of their offences. Furthermore, while the harshness of the old law was often averted by the willingness of judges to assist the accused and give a favourable hearing to technical objections to the proceedings, this is not so under the new law to-day, when it is almost impossible to raise a technical point, and every offence is a kind of treason to the national interest, if not a threat to national security.

While it might be an exaggeration to say that England is already a totalitarian country, it is well to note the trees which have bowed to the prevailing wind. Time was when a new crime was matter for long and earnest debate in Press and Parliament, and the edict which finally went forth was confined within closely set limits, while the common law faithfully insisted upon proof of *mens rea* or guilty mind. To-day we are so pleasantly casual about things. Orders are continually made, revoked or varied, not only under Regulation 55 but also under other Defence Regulations, all of them with appalling sanctions attached. It is widely recognized that political policy must be fluid enough to meet the ever-developing emergency, and law, as the Soviet Constitution declares, is an instrument of politics. On questions of punishment we have outstripped the Mikado, our object all sublime to achieve in the shortest time, not the fitting of the punishment to the crime, but the fulfilment of the intentions so smugly catalogued in the Supplies and Services Acts. Law is a conditioning unto Socialism.

THE chances are that if you increase the number of crimes, you will increase the number of criminals. Perhaps it is small wonder that with such an uncounted choice of crimes before us we bother no more with the tawdry old sins which were long thought to be the cause of human misery. Those diverting characters of the morality play, the Seven Deadlies, star no longer in life's tragedies. Meanwhile the public may be tiring of tedious discussions between those who are unintelligently mystified by the increase of juvenile delinquency. To mature citizens of the new dispensation it is apparent that sin pays higher dividends than crime,

especially when sin is only remembered as a pretext for the public examination of everybody else's conscience and the consequent blaming of everybody else.

Some day we may discover that the New Machiavelli, for all its seeming irresistibility, is already old-fashioned and out of date. Members of Parliament still find themselves able to claim that Socialism is the bulwark against Communism, but they are several years behindhand with the news. The countries of Europe which have rejected Communism have with no less persistence and regularity rejected Socialism, and the majorities are now held by Christian Democratic Parties. Even Germany, the pioneer homeland of Socialist experiment, has opted for a free economy. There is a new look about legislation on the Continent, which may lead to a restoration of the Rule of Law. But when will it succeed in swimming the Channel?

NOT ENOUGH

IF there be nothing but this earthly span,
  Nor any God, then justice is a word
That signifies the will of some one man
  Or else the changeful fancies of the herd;
If there were nothing but this earthly life,
  Then nothing could be really right or wrong,
Expedience were all, and in the strife
The gun and gallows, flattery and knife
  Sole arbiters between the weak and strong;
If there were nothing but this life on earth,
How void of meaning would it be, or worth!
  Small cause there were to wish it to be long
And less to thank our parents for our birth!
  Yet they who teach that this life stands alone,
Pretend to take a high and moral tone!

HEP HANOW.

SUSSEX DOWNS

UP to the good green hill,
Where skylarks climb and shrill
Through sunbeams yellow!
Where gorse and thyme scents meet,
And each gale blows more sweet
Than did his fellow . . .

And now, the crest attained,
We'll think that something gained,
This ridge shall show us
How looks, when June is young,
The skylark oversung
Green world below us.

The patterned meadows make
A chequer: that's our lake
That slight patch gleaming,
With two bright specks thereon,
Each twinkling point a swan
Asleep and dreaming.

The distant castle seems
A bosky world of dreams
To glide or fade in,
Whilst from its tranquil walls,
A long blue shadow falls
The herd may shade in.

The turf whereon we lie
Is like a nether sky
With all the nations
Of heath-flowers dewy bright,
Their eyes aglow with light,
For constellations.

A shepherd calls his curs,
Rounds up the loiterers,
Then sleeps before a
Copse he long approved:
Man not unbeloved
Of Pan and Flora.

A dragon-fly forth springs,
With opal flash of wings,
A blithe new-comer,
And mighty bees anon,
With solemn bag-pipe drone,
Cry, "*Summer! Summer!*"

KENNETH HARE.

"THE COME-BACK"

By GEORGE RODERICK

THE influenza epidemic that swept the country in early March was severe. It disturbed the Hon. Gilbert Brewer who was training fancied candidates for the Gold Cup and Champion Hurdle to be run at Cheltenham the following week.

On Wednesday night the week before the meeting, every lad in his yard had been forced to his bed, with one exception. James Drewitt, head man in his establishment, was still on his feet. The doctor had inoculated the patients and was hopeful that the worst effects of the disease might be averted. He had intended to inject the Hon. Gilbert and James Drewitt, but on reflection considered that it would be a waste of time and good serum.

He had on occasions warned them severely that unless they cut down on the whisky and the gin, he could not be responsible for any ill, such as a stroke, which might befall them. But in this instance he surmised that a germ would have no better chance of survival in the environment of the Hon. Gilbert and James Drewitt, than had the attendants of Nebuchadnezzar when stoking up the burning fiery furnace.

HIS surmise was correct and they remained immune. Neither had any fears of being confined to the sick room, a place in their opinion only made for young men and women who visited the cinema and drank tea in place of the stronger brews with which they regaled themselves.

"How many of them still bellyaching?" asked the Hon. Gilbert when he entered the yard on Thursday morning.

"Every one of 'em," replied James Drewitt sadly.

"No one fit to ride out?"

"So they say."

"Umph," growled the Hon. Gilbert, "six horses in the yard; two run next week. When did I say the others were in?"

"Bank 'oliday."

"Then give 'em a ball a-piece, which will keep 'em bellyaching a bit like these lousy lads. And do 'em good, too."

"What about the other two, sir?" asked James Drewitt.

"Lead 'em out," snapped the Hon. Gilbert, "and give 'em a turn round on the lunging rein."

"Will want a bit of help. They are rare strong at the moment."

"Then get old Barney to help you, you fool. I suppose he is not grovelling in his bed, too."

"No, he ain't that, but he's busy with the ewes lambing."

"Damn the ewes, and let Nature take its course!" commanded the Hon. Gilbert, as he stumped out to the house.

THE trainer was no fool. He fancied both horses very much and had supported his convictions by considerable investments on them in the ante-post betting, but he knew well they were gross sorts and wanted plenty of work up to the day of their races. When the doctor called and told him that there was no chance of any of the boys being fit for work in the next few days, he decided that he must act and act quickly.

He sent telegrams to Murphy and Dowling who were to ride them in their respective races to come at once to ride them at work.

The remuneration he offered was handsome.

The reply came that they would be at the stables early Saturday morning. He read the telegram with mixed feelings, but consoled himself with the thought that half a loaf is better than no bread.

HE informed Drewitt and told him to repeat Thursday's work on Friday.

Drewitt agreed, at the same time saying that they were a handful to manage on the rope and they must have a gallop on Saturday.

"And so they will!" blazed the Hon. Gilbert. "Didn't I tell you, you fool, that Murphy and Dowling are coming to ride them."

"So you did, guv'nor, but them Newmarket chaps are none too reliable. Shouldn't wonder if they hadn't the same h'outbreak there as 'ere, and a lot of others after 'em, offering big money, too."

"Then, if that is so," snapped the trainer, "you and I will ride them ourselves."

"So we will," answered James Drewitt. "'Bout time they had an 'orseman on their backs; leastways, the one I rides."

The Hon. Gilbert ignored the innuendo and returned to the house. It was ten o'clock that night, when he was pouring himself out his fourth "double" that the telephone rang.

"Telegram from Newmarket."

" *Unavoidably detained.*

DOWLING. MURPHY."

The Hon. Gilbert swore loudly, drained his glass, poured himself out another, and went to bed.

HIS temper was not of the best when he entered the yard next morning.

"Those bloody fellows not coming!"

"Oh dearie me! What are we to do?" moaned James Drewitt, as he laid down the fork with which he was mucking out the box.

"Do?" snapped the Hon. Gilbert. "Do as I told you yesterday; we will ride them ourselves."

"But, guv'nor, we are a bit 'eavy."

"And so we may be. Do them good to carry a bit of weight instead of these incompetent midgets. We will start at nine o'clock."

"Very good, sir, and which will you ride?"

"Rataplan," said the Honourable, naming the Gold Cup candidate, which he knew stood still when being mounted and different from the hurdle horse Good Plan, who suffered from a cold back.

IN the time of Aubrey Hastings and Arthur Wood, the Hon. Gilbert had been a rider of some renown. He had won the National Hunt Steeplechase and was recognized as the crack rider in Hunt steeplechases. James Drewitt had flourished in the days when Danny Maher and Bill Higgs were riding them, and as a fashionable lightweight had won the Cambridgeshire and other good races. But increasing weight had cut short both their careers, and at the start of World War No. 1 they were established as trainer and head lad on the Berkshire Downs, where they had remained ever since.

At first they had ridden occasional gallops, then the racehorses on their walk to the Downs only; but long since they had taken to riding cobs.

Daily they might be seen, Drewitt riding in front of the string, Brewer in the rear on animals exactly similar in appearance. And so for that matter were the two men. A tight-fitting cap, stout cord breeches, box-cloth gaiters, a short covert coat were worn by each and from anyone not knowing them it would be difficult to distinguish t'other from which. So much so that an undergraduate who had brought his horse over from Oxford in preparation for a Grind, had pressed five shillings into the Honourable's hand !

But they were not without honour, even in their own country. Road men, farm labourers and suchlike envied their rotund forms and brick-red faces which they assumed correctly came from good living; farmers respected them as occasionally giving a good winner and also from the secret thought that when they collapsed from apoplexy, the cobs might come into their possession and they were just the sorts they wanted for riding round the farm.

THIS morning they had divested themselves of the covert coats and appeared, Drewitt in a light pullover sweater, the Honourable in his canvas golfing jacket. Neither meant to get off when he was once on, and they thought the covert coats might be inconvenient in a gallop. But in the first place they had to get on the racehorses! It was their custom to use the mounting block in the yard from which to bestride the cobs and each doubted his ability to hoist the other into the saddle by means of a leg-up.

"He'll stand quiet by the block, guv'nor, if you'll get on him there," said Drewitt, and the Honourable found himself in the saddle without mishap.

With Drewitt it was more difficult. He, too, chose the mounting block, but his mount thought otherwise, and it was not till old Barney had produced a twitch—he was a man who castrated cart colts in his spare time—that the hurdle racer was induced to stand. The animal when loosed made a couple of ineffectual buck jumps but quickly decided that Drewitt's body was heavy and that it was too much like hard work to lift it in a buck jump.

He followed Rataplan quietly out of the yard and followed sedately behind him for the three-mile journey to the gallop.

NEITHER man spoke, but the same thoughts recurred to their minds. Both horses were naturally hard pullers and their enforced idleness was not likely to make them more amenable. Yet these light lads were able to hold them, and it would be odd, thought Drewitt, if he who had been known in his heyday as the "strong boy" and had wrestled many a hard pulling nontrier down the course, should not still be the equal of the modern lads whom he despised.

The Honourable, too, reflected on the same lines. The harder they pulled the better he used to like them, and in his iron grip no horse had ever been out of control for long.

"Orders, sir," asked Drewitt as they got on the gallop.

"Go in front a nice steady gallop, twice round the mile."

"Very good, sir," said Drewitt, as he pulled up his leathers five holes and assumed the seat of his youth modelled on Sloan.

"Ready, guv'nor?" said Drewitt as he let his horse jump off.

The Honourable was not ready. It had been his intention to follow at an interval of some hundred yards, but Rataplan thought otherwise. Whipping round with alacrity, by the time they had gone one hundred yards he was in the quarters of Good Plan and Good Plan resented it. No horse had ever headed him until the run-in, and not many then, and Rataplan had no business to be near him now.

UNFORTUNATELY the Honourable was wearing spurs. Though he hated such appliances on a gallop, he was accustomed to wear long rowelled ones to stimulate his sluggish cob and by force of habit he had them on to-day. Worse still, when his mount took him by surprise by jumping off one of them had given a sharp stab to Rataplan's belly.

"Go on, you fool," roared the Honourable. "I didn't say a hack-canter!"

Whether Drewitt heard cannot be recorded, but he knew well that with all his wiles learnt in a tough school, he could not restrain him.

The Honourable was in like case. Though his mighty arms and legs still retained a little of their former vigour, sufficient in the first lap to keep his mount on an even keel, he knew his powers were running out.

All he could see was the posterior of Drewitt raised off the saddle in imitation of the old American Master looking for all the world like an animated cask of beer. Gallantly he strove to keep in place behind it. Drewitt was tiring rapidly. The cask of beer was seeking rest on the cantle of the saddle. His hands had dropped and he was out of control. As they rounded the bend for home the Honourable cracked, too. He slumped in his

seat, his reins went slack, and for the first time in his life he was a passenger.

NORMALLY the animals might have taken the slackening of the reins as a signal to slow down, but to-day they were not normal animals. Good Plan never was, and the prick of the spur had driven Rataplan demented. He stayed longer than Good Plan and was a length to the good as they passed the post. The horse is a creature of habit and they knew the customary place to stop. It was unfortunate that the cows should have been there, but it made soft falling for both Drewitt and the Honourable. Each had passed out. The horses did not go far. Carrying fourteen stone a-piece at racing pace over two miles had tired them. It was convenient that Farmer Green was there with his lad looking after the ewes. The farm buildings were handy and they led the horses to them.

Farmer Green did not ring up the doctor. He was a practical man and argued that if the riders were dead, as he supposed, the doctor would not be of any use. If they were alive he would give the same prescription as he was getting now from the cupboard.

THE brandy revived them both.

The Honourable was the first to speak.

"One of my damned giddy fits," he said to Green, and in angrier tones to Drewitt: "What are you doing lying there?"

"Crossed his legs and fell when he pulled up," lied Drewitt.

"Get up, then, and we will take them home."

They might have done so and again they might not. Luckily a car drew up in the lane nearby. The Honourable was the first to note the passengers.

"You are late, damn you," he greeted Murphy and Dowling. "Take those two horses home and do them up. Tell the driver to take me and Drewitt. The fellow looks like having a fit, and I suppose I had better be with him."

THAT afternoon the doctor called at the request of Drewitt's wife and the Honourable's housekeeper. He advised rest for a day, but entered in his notebook that Harrogate would not be necessary for the Honourable this summer or the Institution for Drewitt.

The gallop had drained more alcohol than either resort could hope to expunge.

Murphy and Dowling had their reward. Their mounts made surprising light of the welter burdens they were set to carry in the two races, and they won with their heads in their chests.

The Honourable when he visits the Corinthian Club, St. James's, S.W.1, is accustomed to remark when he alludes to the great double, that he rode the Gold Cup winner in his final gallop and that he thought the change of hands had been useful. Drewitt may be heard nightly at the "Dog and Partridge" saying, "He never went right until I rode him myself." And when young men are there he adds: "Live a good life and you may keep fit as long as me."

RETURN TO THE BATTLEFIELDS OF ITALY

By LEONARD MARSLAND GANDER*

ITALY'S annals, wrote Byron, are graved in characters of flame. Thousands of allied soldiers who saw her "sweet brow" ploughed with new sorrows may wonder how it appears to-day.

When I returned to the battlefields this summer I had various intentions. I wanted to show my wife the scenes of triumph or disaster, and to recapture exciting memories. I wanted to absorb the true peace of the bare bruised hills and verdant valleys where Alexander's international army thundered forward.

Inevitably, Monte Cassino drew me. In 1944 we had thought of it as a German bastion barring the road to Rome. Now there drummed through my head the recollection of something I had read. I looked it up, eventually, and it ran:

"He foresaw a time when men, exultant in the technique of homicide, would rage so hotly over the world that every precious thing would be in danger, every book and picture and harmony, every treasure gathered through two milleniums, the small, the delicate, the defenceless—all would be lost like the lost books of Livy. . . ."

This might have referred to St. Benedict, who, in the bow and arrow year of A.D. 529 founded the Abbey on Monte Cassino which was destroyed in the allied bombardments of 1944. Actually, it is the High Lama speaking in James Hilton's book "Lost Horizon", written in the pre-World War II, pre-atomic age, and referring to his fictional founder of Shangri-la.

Fate has destined the Abbey, perched on its 2,000 ft. peak, to symbolize, through the centuries, the mysterious balance of destructive and creative forces in the world. When St. Benedict lived his lonely fastness may have seemed as secure an oasis of culture as the imaginary Shangri-la in the Himalayas. But time and "progress" played devilish tricks. St. Benedict himself, in prophetic grief, foresaw its destruction by the Longobards. It was rebuilt, only to be sacked again by the Saracens, who murdered the Abbot and many of the monks in 833. Five hundred years later an earthquake wrecked it for the third time. Again a new Abbey arose from the ruins, this time built substantially enough to resist the most destructive forces of man or nature. In the Renaissance it became world-famous as a centre for poets, scientists and artists. Man's homicide technique beat the builders. When the allied bombs rained in February, 1944, they smashed down walls sixteen feet thick.

Doubts whether the Germans had ever occupied the monastery arose soon after the bombing, and were confirmed when General von Senger und Etterlin, a former Rhodes scholar at Oxford who commanded the 14th Panzer Corps at Cassino, wrote in the April issue of the *New English Review*. He said that he was the only German soldier, who entered when he attended Mass on Christmas Day, 1943, celebrated in the crypt among two hundred refugees. Kesselring had given express orders that the Abbey's neutrality should be respected.

Allied soldiers or airmen who had any part

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* *As a war correspondent Mr. Marsland Gander accompanied the Allied armies in 1944 from Cassino to Florence. His account of the campaign appears in an autobiographical work, published recently, called "After These Many Quests"—Macdonald, 15/-*

in the destruction must feel some moral anguish at the tragic mistake. A desire to discover a reason was one purpose of my return visit; another to see what progress, if any, had been made with the reconstruction. One point obscured in von Senger's account is that the Germans were undoubtedly occupying positions high up on Monastery Hill—as we called it. He avoids stating how close to the Monastery walls these positions were.

My first acquaintance with the Monastery was just before the final allied offensive at Cassino in May, 1944. Many allied soldiers—British, Americans, Indians, New Zealanders—had been killed in the previous assaults. British troops were clinging precariously to about two thirds of the shattered ruins of Cassino Town, in a dangerously close clinch with the enemy. Crouching in their improvised forts among the rubble they were over looked everywhere by the Germans. Even the height of Castle Hill, which was in our hands, was dominated by the loftier Monte Cassino. All the daylight hours Cassino was covered by a stifling white smoke screen to give our men a fighting chance. The slightest movement observed brought down a murderous mortar fire from above.

For about two miles Highway Six ran as straight as a die into Cassino, over a Bailey bridge thrown across the Rapido. It was under close surveillance by the enemy, and, as the life-line of our troops in Cassino, could only be used by soft stepping mules at night for supply purposes. In daylight it was a most unpleasant death track, which we all avoided. We used to stop at a point on Highway Six where the road was sheltered by another hill, before it curved round on to the evil straight stretch. From there we usually branched off to the right and jeeped up to the mountain village of Cervaro, which, just before the final offensive, was the headquarters of Polish Corps. From Cervaro, at a relatively safe distance of several miles one could observe the Monastery and the white ruins of Cassino Town across a wide valley.

Even Cervaro itself was not altogether healthy. It was plastered with warning notices, such as "You are now under enemy observation. Don't be a fool." Personally I always conscientiously did my best to oblige the writer, but even behind the broken walls of Cervaro I did not feel happy and much too close to the Pearly Gates. The simple fact is that the Germans gave daily demonstrations that they held concealed positions high up on Monte Cassino. Whether they were actually inside the Monastery was impossible to tell from our side of the lines and in any case was of only academic importance to our troops to whom careless exposure meant sudden death.

Our Press expedition to the Monastery on the day that it was captured by the Poles was a grim, crazy affair illustrating the high pressure publicity machine in action. To recall it and what we saw will show the changes that five years have wrought.

News that there was a white flag on the Monastery had spread among the correspondents—Americans, British, French and Poles—who in jeep loads, armed with cameras and typewriters, made their way to Polish headquarters at Cervaro. Twenty or thirty journalists and photographers vociferously demanded to be guided up to the Monastery. Polish staff officers were dubious but General Anders, after giving us a pep talk and a lunch, yielded to persuasion. We started off in a long cavalcade, breaking all the rules of war by raising large clouds of dust. But the German artillery was too busy clearing out of harm's way to worry about this assault from the Fourth Estate.

We skirted several formidable hills, wound down a long dusty lane appropriately called "The Inferno", and then, having lost all touch with the guide, began to straggle over a steep hill where burial parties were busy and mortar bombs, lobbed casually over the brow, landed here and there. We threaded clueless through the lazy drifts of smoke, vaguely following somebody in front, stumbling on, past first-aid posts and war wreckage of all

sorts. There were bodies everywhere; we were sickened by the sight and smell of death.

We toiled up and down hill. I had not the faintest idea where we were or where we were heading. Once we ran the gauntlet of a sharp mortar barrage, and were flattered to know that the enemy, at least, was taking some definite interest. Then reaching a spot where the mine-lifting squads had been working, we followed a white tape down a slope into a blasted wood, where every tree was stripped and the ground churned with bomb and shell holes. On the summit beyond this tumult of ground stood a ghostly gaping ruin, the Abbey. It was the livid whiteness that made most impression, caused, I suppose, by the powdering of the stones in the repeated bombardments. Its walls had been torn into miniature Matterhorns. The rubble piled steeply round, made it more inaccessible than ever. I climbed up it on hands and knees, pushing in front a flagpole which I had been induced in a quixotic fit to carry for the Poles. It had taken three hours of strenuous climbing to reach our objective. Eight or ten hours, if you include the jeeping and the arguing.

Not merely the Monastery itself but the whole area round it had been so pounded with high explosive that it was a scene of appalling desolation. There were sangars here and there which the Germans had obviously used but there were no signs of any big concrete emplacements. It was surprising to see how much of the Abbey had survived the persistent fury of our bombardments. At the north-western corner the masonry was still standing to a height I estimated at thirty feet. The two main courtyards were still recognizable as such, but consulting my guide book, I vainly tried to identify the various wrecked chapels. I went through the tunnel of what I took to be the crypt, where rafters were still burning and where I crunched hundreds of German tin cans under foot.

One chapel I entered had been so well preserved that saintly frescoes on the wall, dedicated to the virtues, were unharmed. Everywhere the Germans had left piles of mortar bombs, blankets, packs and grenades, and in one dark room I came across three wounded German parachutists left behind with a note asking that they should be looked after as it was impossible to evacuate them.

All this evidence of occupation is explained by Von Senger und Etterlin who says that *after* the bombing the Germans occupied it immediately, and he adds, it formed the best strong point in the sector. He ignores the fact that it was always possible for the Germans to establish positions on the inaccessible slopes all round the monastery, as near to it as they cared to place them, points which we could not bomb or shell without grave risk of hitting the monastery buildings.

The Poles had, of course, taken the Monastery from "the rear" where the approach is up a gentle slope. On the Cassino side the hill rises abruptly, barren and forbidding. In places its gradients must be one in three or four. Only when I stood on the crumbling southern ramparts, overlooking Cassino Town and the straight stretch of Highway Six leading to Naples, could I realize the full meaning of General Wilson's cold phrase: "It dominated all approaches to the town and to Highway Six." Human flies crawling below were easy game for the German swatters above.

* * *

IN swift transition I come to June, 1949. We motored down a new Highway Six from Rome to Cassino—a Via Casilina free from war traffic, dust, cryptic military signs, and roadside wrecks. There were plentiful reminders. Our swarthy, handsome driver—Private Angelo, my wife called him—was wearing a British officer's uniform, with leather buttons. He was miraculous, having spent three years as a prisoner of war in America without learning one single word of English. Like most Italian drivers he used the horn to express his personality and drove like a bat out of hell.

Rebuilding has gone on rapidly. Every main bridge has been permanently restored, and many new houses have sprung up in wrecked towns and villages. Cassino itself is the greatest achievement of all. A new town, of pretty boxes in pastel shades of cream, rose and terra-cotta is piled like a collection of children's bricks against the sombre mountain background. Part of it they call "Unra City"; part of the ruined town is preserved as a warning, a tourist attraction, or a memorial—I am not sure which.

We passed an older ruin, the small Colosseum, which, I recall, was a German strongpoint. Then we saw a new sign, in English: "To the British Military Cemetery." There, in trim rows between the lavender and evergreen hedges lie 4,300 mute witnesses—British and Dominion dead, including two War Correspondents, Cyril Bewley and Roderick Macdonald, an Australian. Clay that bogged down the New Zealanders and the Canadian tanks glues to your feet there, but it will be good soil for the English garden.

The gardener, Steve Curd, who shares his lonely life with a Yugoslav wife, told us the local gossip. There is a village close to Cassino called Valvori, which they say was untouched because some of its inhabitants had lived in England!

Scrap metal is precious in Italy, and the battling armies have left a rich legacy. Peasants scour the hillsides continuously hunting for the "scheggia" as they call it. Steve said that they received the equivalent of about twopence for a kilogram of iron and about eightpence for a kilogram of copper or bronze. Sometimes acquisitiveness outran discretion and there were tragedies with live shells and grenades.

From the foot of Monastery Hill, the Abbey looked already substantially rebuilt, and there are no jagged walls to be seen. Remembering the three hours trek in 1944, I asked Steve how long it would take to get up there.

"About twenty minutes, in the car," he said. "It's a good road."

We began to climb the dizzy series of hairpins, wondering what would happen if we met something coming the other way. But all we met were parties of scrap hunters, carrying their little cans and baskets. Steve said that some of them had been in trouble with the Benedictines for doing damage to the newly restored terraced gardens. When we were high up I saw in a hollow slightly below the Monastery level, the serried rows of the large Polish cemetery, which is marked by an immense evergreen cross. I reckoned that it was set in the path of their advance, but things looked so radically different that orientation was difficult. Far beneath us the swampy fields by the Gari and Rapido, once churned with shells and bombs, were lush green. We could barely trace the line of the river with a silver glint here and there.

Our car swung at last on to a cleared level area and I saw a wonderful transformation. The Monastery plateau is one of the busiest scenes in all Italy. Hundreds of labourers and stonemasons, their heads shaded with a variety of queer hats included some made of paper, their arms and faces burnt Indian brown, chipped away incessantly with hammer and chisel. Sharp stone and marble fragments lay thick as snow and to protect valuable footwear many were wearing sections of old tyre strapped over their feet.

An unpretentious barracks apart from the main Abbey and known as San Giuseppe is now complete, providing accommodation for twenty-five monks and ten seminaries. We went to the main door and rang hopefully. For a long time the bell produced nothing but pealing echoes. Then, when, with London impatience, we were almost deciding that there was no one at home, we heard footfalls. A smiling monk welcomed us, in Italian, and motioned us in. A long language struggle began. Only one of the Monks, and he apparently not available, spoke English. After I had explained myself, the new head of the Monastery, Abbott Rea, himself appeared. He was a willowy, gracious figure with a benevolent smile, gold spectacles and a

magenta skull cap. He professed to speak French "*un petit peu*".

We exchanged courtesies and I put my questions. Did the Germans occupy the monastery before the bombing? No, they did not. Did they have any guns near the monastery? Yes, within thirty metres.

The Abbot, with clasped hands and effulgent smile, soon took his leave, but in pity for our language difficulty, the monks produced their solitary English speaker, Father Girolamo Panaccione.

The good Father was short and had dark cropped hair. He was amiable and friendly, eager to tell us all about the financial difficulties of rebuilding. But first he apologized for his English, "all learnt out of books". Needless, for he spoke it excellently.

It is the monks' ambition to restore the monastery exactly as it was—every stone, every statue, every painting. It will take years and years, perhaps a generation, and cost billions of lire. "Our motto," explained Father Girolamo, "is *Succisa Virescit*. Cut down, like a tree, it grows again".

They speak of needing £1,000,000 for the restoration of the buildings and £5,000,000 for the artistic work. Most of the money so far subscribed has come from the Italian Government, and there have been small contributions from Belgium and Switzerland. The Abbot toured America, appealing for funds but met with little response. Marshall aid must, however, be helping—directly or indirectly.

Progress with the rebuilding is already impressive and it has risen to one storey in most parts. The greatest preliminary task has been removing the rubble, and no less than 400,000 cubic yards of it has been shifted. We entered by an arched passageway built with the massive solidity of the old Monastery. Carved in the new stone was the word "PAX" (Peace). I remembered the irony of seeing the word carved somewhere else in the ruins, in 1944, over a stone dove that had had one leg amputated by a flying splinter.

A small panel has been cut in memory of Gregorius Diamare, the old Abbot who was eighty-two at the time of the bombing and died soon afterwards. There is, by the way, no question that the monks had adequate warning of the allies intention to bomb the monastery. A small official booklet sold by the Benedictines to tourists, states that "all the monks were saved, but several hundred civilians lost their lives". Incidentally, this booklet tactfully refrains from mentioning the nationality of the monastery's destroyers, and shows no animus, but refers to the "valiant Poles", who succeeded in capturing the monastery, "thus freeing it from the horrors of war".

The central cloister, which, when I last saw it was buried in dust and debris, has taken shape again. With infinite patience, workers under the direction of the monks, have delved into the ruins to find pieces of the numerous statues. It is the world's biggest jig-saw puzzle. I saw one statue that had been found in twenty-five fragments and carefully cemented together again. Another was found in twenty-three pieces and is being reassembled. A marble statue of St. Benedict had the head smashed, but now a new head has been carved, exactly as before, and fitted on. The joins make thin veins hardly noticeable at a distance of a few yards. A monk called Father Angelo directs much of the artistic restoration.

Father Girolamo explained that more than 70,000 books were lost in the bombardment, but 30,000 were saved. Incidentally the Monks had custody of books from the Keats and Shelley library in Rome. These were also saved.

The refectory has been rebuilt and is being used as a museum. A small charge is made for admission, the money going to reconstruction. But the Monastery is too inaccessible to attract many visitors. We were the only arrivals on this particular afternoon. One exhibit is a part of Luca Giordano's fresco showing St. Benedict when "he foresaw and wept over the destruction of the Monastery"

This, the Monks say, was the only part of his frescoes which survived, and, incidentally, St. Benedict's tomb was also practically intact. Little remained of what the booklet describes lyrically as the "extraordinarily rich, perhaps unique", contents of the great Basilica, which was decorated with "inlaid marble, gildings and marvellous paintings".

Art connoisseurs may not entirely agree with this appraisal but there is no doubt that the replacement of it all is a prodigious task. In their museum the monks do not hestitate to include a bomb or two and a grisly picture of refugees' bodies in the ruins, as their version of the Chamber of Horrors.

The brick framework of the church, including the Sanctuary is already rebuilt.

Few visitors can fail to be moved by the demonstration of faith and perseverance in the rising walls of the new Monte Cassino Abbey. Weighing the evidence, I have no doubt that the Germans did not enter the Abbey buildings until after our bombing. On the other hand, it is equally certain that they held positions very close to it, and were therefore coming under the protection of the Abbey walls and abusing its neutrality. The Abbey, by the misfortune of war, had become a serious embarrassment to the Allies and a help to the enemy, for there could be no guarantee that our shells or bombs would not hit it by mistake. There were instances of pin-point bombing during the war—notably when the R.A.F. singled out one floor of a building in Copenhagen used as a Gestapo headquarters. But generally speaking bombing did not attain anything like this accuracy, and, in fact, during the attacks on the monastery General Leese's caravan, many miles away on our side of the lines, was blown up by a stray stick.

No doubt the allied commanders were seriously misled by their intelligence reports, but, in any case, to expect the allied air forces to single out positions only thirty metres away from the Monastery was asking the impossible. It was a grave and ruthless decision to order the whole area of Monte Cassino to be saturated with high explosive, but it was an attempt to shorten a campaign in which many allied lives were being lost.

The bombing will probably go down as one of the inevitable accidents of history, and now the whole Christian world will wish the Benedictines well in their gigantic labours.

THE OFFERING

A SONNET'S but a scallopful of words
Yet such a shell holds immortality,
Cups in its curve the murmur of the sea,
The rose of love, the honey and the curds
From Aristeus' bees and Daphnis' herds;
Here echo still in passionate brevity
The thunder of the heart, the ecstasy
That quickens Philomel, most wronged of birds,
Whose grief yet unassuaged mourns as of old
The mortal, unforgotten deeds in Thrace
And cannot all her ancient sorrow tell:
Fortunate he who, being great with grace,
May in the spirit's fountain dip this shell
And offer brimming water, coral-cold.

SUSANNE KNOWLES.

Theatre

"AT LAST A PLAY!"

By HUBERT GRIFFITH

BONAVENTURE. By Charlotte Hastings. *Vaudeville.*

BEFORE THE PARTY. By Rodney Ackland (from Somerset Maugham). *St. Martin's.*

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY. By Tennessee Williams. *Duchess.*

LET'S MAKE AN OPERA. By Eric Crozier, music by Benjamin Britten. *Lyric, Hammersmith.*

FALLEN ANGELS. By Noel Coward. *Ambassadors'.*

CASTLE IN THE AIR. By Alan Melville. *Adelphi.*

TO me, by far the most original and best new play of the last year was a play called *Bonaventure*, recently come to the Vaudeville, with Miss Fay Compton and Miss Mary Kerridge in the two chief parts.

It had had what is called a "try-out" by the Windsor Repertory Company. It is the work of a middle-aged authoress, Charlotte Hastings, who had apparently never had a professional production of any play of hers before.

And two of my most intelligent colleagues, Mr. Alan Dent of the *News-Chronicle*, and Mr. Beverley Baxter of the *Evening Standard*, while warmly approving of the play, have gone on to add that it was primarily a "woman's play", or words to that effect, and that it will be primarily "a matter of interest and discussion among women".

Now, why, in the name of heaven, should they take this line? Why should men, when it comes to a play of subtle psychology—and actually much better than this, a drama of faith and ethics—be classed among the lesser apes or the lower baboons, and written-off as incapable of understanding it?

I simply do not know. The situation is an interesting one from the beginning. The scene is a floodbound convent in East Anglia. The neighbours are rushing in for refuge. Among them is a party of three, a girl (an artist) condemned to death for murder, her warder and her wardress, all floodbound in the convent, while waiting to proceed on the last stage of their dreadful journey, to Norwich prison where she will be hanged.

The play has been called "static", and of course, it is static. The tension of those three agonizing, immobile days—the intolerable strain of the waiting—are the very essence of its drama. But thanks to the power of writing of the author, and the physical and spiritual beauty conveyed by Miss Fay Compton (as Sister Bonaventure) who believes, as a revelation from God, that her charge may be innocent, and the restrained intensity of Miss Mary Kerridge—the whole thing is swept up to the highest plane of drama of all—to that of spiritual drama—and not a moment of that waiting is dramatically lost.

There is a wonderful passage where Sister Bonaventure, to prevent her guest going out of her mind during the waiting, suggests that she should re-design a great piece of the convent tapestry that has been torn away. "What's the use?" says the girl. "I'll only be remembered as a murderess." "You'll be remembered as an artist," says the Sister. Flaubert has somewhere or other, I think written during the Siege of Paris, the golden phrase, "*la consolation des arts*". Even on the way to the certainty of the gallows, I think that an artist would sooner fill in his (or her) time in designing a tapestry than in playing poker-patience.

From Miss Fay Compton, a performance of radiant loveliness. From Miss Mary

Kerridge, a performance of glowing and subdued fire. From Miss Deidre Doyle, as the Mother Superior, a performance as good as that which the late Dame Irene Vanbrugh might have given.

Screams from the gallery, "At last a Play!" I don't always agree with the gallery, but this time I do.

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM has a good and bitter brain. In *Before the Party*, a play enlarged out of a short-story by him, by Mr. Rodney Ackland, he apparently hates everyone living. Even the heroine, the one near-to-decent person in the whole set-up, is no better than a might-have-been. She murders her husband in the tropics because he drinks too much. The whole thing, with the "i's" dotted and the "t's" crossed by Mr. Ackland, is a hymn of hate against the snobbery and pretentiousness of the middle-class (the upper-middle class, as they would no doubt call themselves). When they learn that their daughter has committed a murder it shocks them—for the minute. Then they find that it will probably remain undetected. Then they are back at once to thinking, "What will the neighbours say?"—"What will the Bishop say?" and, most intensely of all, "What exactly are we going to have for dinner to-night? Is there to be a soufflé—or can this be turned into a savoury?" As the heroine remarks, "Does this family *never* stop talking about food?"

There is a passage in Ruskin where, talking about Salvator Rosa, who had called himself "*despiser of wealth and death*", Ruskin says, "O, condemned Salvator" (the painter and composer was known as "*le Salvator Damné*") "Man is not known by what he despises, but by what he loves!" Now here is something to argue about. If a man says he is a despiser of wealth and death, it is fair to assume that he is a lover of life, and an admirer of independence. Does Maugham, because he loathes and pillories the snobbery of the upper-middle-class, believe in decency and fair trading? I can believe that he does, and at least give him the benefit of the doubt.

The play is a "difficult" play, because all the characters, almost without exception, are abundantly detestable. And—for those who choose to see it—there is no relief in the end. The heroine elopes with the young man she is in love with, who happens to be heir to a Peerage. Happy curtain? But not quite. The heroine killed her first husband because he drank too much. But it has been deliberately "planted", in the course of the story, that inebriation runs in the new young man's family, and that he is already on the same course. The implication is left that history will probably repeat itself. On the whole, the bitterest play of the year, but with some magnificent acting opportunities. Taken full advantage of by Mr. D. A. Clark Smith, by Miss Judith Furse, by Miss Mary Merrall (though there is a little too much of this fluttering mother part) by Mr. Roderick Lovell, by Miss Margaret Barton as the terrible little over-intense juvenile, and by Miss Constance Cummings in the "star" part of the heroine.

PHILADELPHIA STORY (Duchess) is a play about American life; and here again I think that one or two of my colleagues—not to be too captious—have slightly missed the point. The complaint is that, whereas some of the characters—the "family"—speak rather pointedly choice English, the two intruders, the hard-boiled pressman from New York and his girl, speak rather rough-neck Americanese. Comment: "Another play where some people speak in one idiom, and other members of the cast speak in another. The play should have been left to an all-American cast." But here I beg to disagree. Can the experienced producer, Mr. Harold French, and the experienced manager, Mr. Henry Sherek (who spends half his life in America) have made such an elementary mistake as this? Of course they can't. The play is a play of social values, much more Jamesian than, say, the direct approach to life of the author of *A Street-car Named Desire*;

and it is established, even by the opening remark of the mother, correcting her daughter's speech, that Philadelphia families who consider themselves of a certain social standing, take pride in the Englishness of their speech and their tradition. The pressman from New York considers them faintly funny; the family consider him slightly uncouth. The play is not a great play, but it provides a charming and civilized evening. A young film-star, Miss Margaret Leighton, who had a not very generous showing when she appeared with the Old Vic. Company a few seasons ago, has a long enough part to convince me that she can really hold and dominate the stage—in a word, can "act."

LET'S MAKE AN OPERA, book by Mr. Eric Crozier, music by our leading young composer, Mr. Benjamin Britten, started out as a diversion for children at Mr. Britten's home town of Aldburgh. It has ended up by becoming a full-scale entertainment for adults, and as such I believe and hope will remain a classic in the repertory. One does see an opera—a down-to-the-bone elementary opera—constructed and composed from the beginning. The audience is made to do its full part—to its outward embarrassment but secret delight. "Now," says the conductor—in the person of Mr. Norman del Mar, not only a first-rate musician but an accomplished comedian—"I'm going to make you sing this number *against* the time. The orchestra will be doing *this*" (and he demonstrates); "*you*, on the contrary, will be doing *this*." (And he demonstrates again. And we do.) It is one of the pleasantest experiences of recent months.

FALLEN ANGELS is a revival of a twenty-year-old Noel Coward farce. The two principals, Miss Hermione Gingold and Miss Hermione Baddeley, are much too old to be playing in it. One laments the vanished freshness of the young Tallulah Bankhead, and the young Edna Best. One can believe that they brought a certain saving lightness to it. But I'm not going to pretend that the present, almost grotesque version of it, wasn't very, very funny, because it was.

CASTLE IN THE AIR, by Mr. Alan Melville at the *Adelphi*, is chiefly remarkable for the fact that certain officials of the Coal Board seem to have made complete fools of themselves over it. It is the lightest of light farces—Scottish castle, bankrupt Peer, Coal Board officials negotiating for its requisitioning, American millionairess (blonde and glamorous) rushing in to try to buy it out of hand, to the general relief. A good evening, if one is not being too austere in one's thinking, with many witty lines, and good acting from Miss Coral Browne, Miss Irene Manning, and Mr. Jack Buchanan who, in addition to immense technical resources, can still turn on the charm like a tap.

But the real-life attempted interference by junior officials of the Coal Board, puts a different complexion on the whole matter. Did they request, or did they demand, or did they threaten the withdrawal of the play? In any case, the management laughed at them and continued the run of the play exactly as written; and in so doing were perfectly right.

The institution of the Censorship has not much to recommend it. It has muzzled and stifled too many playwrights for me to be wholeheartedly in favour of it. But at least it has one bright and sparkling advantage in the eyes of theatre-managers—it should, and does, gives them protection.

The intervention of the Coal Board juniors (disowned, I am glad to say, by the senior officials the very next day), has only added to the gaiety of nations, and to the attraction of the play.

THE YEARS

PILGRIMS chant
On a prairie shore
Where black wrack towers
And sea-plants sway

A child runs
Past knowledge and reason
A passionate forest
Of gods and heroes
Over tendrils and roots
That dream uncaring
Watered by hurrying rain-tears
Faithful and human

Children sing
In an enchanted garden
O look at the world
Our wonderful world
Is more beautiful than I knew

The rare white year
Like a flower unfolds
And the child of our common love declares
The heart's unreason like falling stars

Serenade the vowed shadow of grace
That sails up from a pool
On the limitless sand
Gleaming and holy
And slowly turning
Its hidden face

The glory hidden so long
Has returned to our peaceful ways
From the fertile mirror of mud
And the fire of the sky

MARY WYKEHAM.

THE SOUL OF EMILY BRONTË

By PHOEBE HESKETH

IT has been said that when the gods wish to punish us they answer our prayers. Whether the gods loved Emily Brontë or punished her, or both, we only know that her own wish was granted, for she died at the age of thirty. Much of her work is immature, but in rare moments she rises to the high peaks of poetry and lives among us for ever.

Reading her poems for the first time, one is aware that a longing for death is never entirely apart from her passionate feeling for life and her love of Nature. When only nineteen she writes:

> "Sleep brings no wish to knit
> My harassed heart beneath;
> My only wish is to forget
> In the sleep of death."

Sorrow overshadowed much of Emily's life: her mother's death when she was only three years old deprived her of the first essentials or warmth, light and comfort. The sombre stone parsonage, where she lived from the age of two, was sprung almost from the loins of that churchyard "terribly full of upright tombstones" as Mrs. Gaskell describes it. This atmosphere and the desolate moors stretching endlessly behind and beyond must have influenced any young mind, especially one as sensitive and susceptible as Emily's. Her father, introspective by nature, and preoccupied with parochial affairs, had little time for a family of six children. When she was only six years old, she was sent with Charlotte and the two elder sisters to boarding-school at Cowan Bridge. Here bad feeding and long cold walks undermined their health so drastically that the elder children died of "low fever". Charlotte and Emily returned home to their father, their brother Branwell, and Anne; the family was cared for by an aunt and the faithful servant Tabby.

THIS unpromising environment and the difficulties of a Celtic temperament (the Brontës were part Irish, part Cornish) was the soil for Emily's genius: it flourished and was fed by frustration and the spiritual conflicts of her nature. Nevertheless, the parsonage children were happy in their isolated life, and hated to be away from home. They developed their fertile imaginations for mutual entertainment by telling stories, devising plays, and always writing.

In this way the Gondal Saga took shape and became a vital part of Emily's life. Gondal was a rocky island in the North Pacific which took root in her imagination, so that she invested it with the winds and rains of Haworth, peopled it with her own creations, and wove around it the colour and drama of a personal legend. Unfortunately the Gondal Chronicles were destroyed, though the poems remain. Many of them are titled by the initials of these imaginary people. Although they do not contain personal allusions and experiences, the imaginary situations are dramatized by her own nature. In her heroes and heroines Emily found spiritual release until her own griefs and joys and problems became theirs. She projected the image of her conception of love into their hearts, so that her poignant and impassioned love poems reflect her desires and frustrations. Yet this explanation almost proves the opposite to be true: though the incidents did not actually occur, the emotions were experienced within herself. True to the nature of her genius, Emily, the woman, was also able to feel as a man. Indeed, M. Heger, her Belgian teacher during her short stay at his school in Brussels,

declared that with her powers of logic and intellect, she should have been a man.

Emily began by playing the "Gondal Game" with her younger sister Anne, but it eventually became an outlet into which she loosed the untenable streams of emotion and imagination which would have otherwise consumed her. In this way she discovered a new world, more real to her than much of her actual life. She inhabited this holiday country of the mind from adolescence until she died; and in its merciful soil the seeds of her genius bore fruit. "Light up Thy Halls", "Silent is the House" and "Cold in the Earth" are three major examples of her Gondal poems.

WALKING alone on the moors, Emily was often accompanied by creations of her imagination till her surroundings merged into those of her heroes and heroines. Underneath the cold Yorkshire sky of a fading day, she sings this dirge:

"Light up thy halls, 'tis closing day,
I'm drear and lone and far away—
Cold blows on my breast the north wind's bitter sigh,
And oh, my couch is bleak beneath the rainy sky! . . .
How gloomy grows the night! 'Tis Gondal's wind that blows;
I shall not tread again the deep glens where it rose . . ."

But her clear sight and fierce intellect were not deceived; she knew her world was make-believe, and invited Fancy, her "fairy love" to visit her in the nostalgic "Gleneden's Dream":

"Shadows come! What means this midnight?
O my God, I know it all!
Know the dream-fever is over!
Unavenged the Avenger's fall!"

Her poetry pierces our hearts like a straight sword, for it is neither entangled in metaphor, complicated with imagery and symbolism, nor blunted by obscurity and awkward rhythms.

She sings in a minor key of tragic and passionate intensity. Often the landscape of her verse is barren and desolate, sometimes sharp with jutting rock or chilled with the granite feel of tombstones. Cold winds, cold stone, and the black swell of mounds are an integral part of it:

"I see around me tombstones grey
Stretching their shadows far away.
Beneath the turf my footsteps tread,
Lie low and lone the silent dead;"

And again

"A grey stone standing over there,
Black mould beneath thee spread . . ."

THE constant use of such words as "drear", "lone", "cold", "dark" and "grey" bring winter to the heart of the reader. The breath of environment pervades all she wrote: in her poems is the surge of the moors; a mournful wind is their accompaniment; dark trees and dead leaves adorn them. Even the intervals of light are threatened by the shadow of death. The "golden harp-strings quiver" and the "amber light" shines so seldom, that in spite of her small output, to read all the poems at a sitting is a heavy task.

Often it seems as though no world existed for Emily beyond the moors:

"That drear moor stretches far away
Till it seems strange that aught can be
Beyond its zone of silver sky."

Emily was miserable and drooped into ill-health whenever she left home; she longed for those moors in which she had taken root as firmly as a native thorn tree. In 1831, at Roe Head, during her second visit to school, she became so listless that Charlotte was obliged to send her home; and writing to a friend she said of her sister: "Emily loved the moors. Flowers brighter than the rose bloomed in the blackest heath for her;—out of a sullen hollow in a livid hillside, her mind could make an Eden . . . Liberty was the breath of Emily's nostrils; without it she perished."

In that sentence Charlotte sounded a key-note of her sister's temperament: Emily loved liberty so dearly that she even resented the imprisonment of her spirit in her body, and longed to be freed from the trials of the flesh—a longing bound up with her desire for final release. She speaks of her "grated den", and when only nineteen she writes:

"I'm happiest when most away
I can bear my soul from its house of clay."

Her nature was stronger than her body or her power of endurance; so Emily lived in a world apart even from the immediate pressure of her family and the parsonage routine. Though she did her duty in the house, her soul was a vagabond; and her mind played truant from the dull necessities of daily life: she baked bread with a German book propped up before her.

HER passion for the moors was almost idolatrous: sometimes she seems to have been possessed of a demon spirit during her wanderings, and in those moments to have lost touch with the God she so ardently desired. This partial disease of the spirit was symbolized in her conception of Heathcliffe whom she imports as a foreigner. In him she personifies her diabolical self, and creates him almost as Milton does Satan. "Wuthering Heights" cannot be separated from her poetry —not only is it one of the few inspired novels of the world, it is the greatest ever written by an Englishwoman, for it is creative with the sublimity of poetry. The dark Satanism is foreshadowed and reflected in some of her verse. When she was only twenty, the ominous shade of Heathcliffe was already closing round her. We can recognize him in these menacing and powerful lines:

"Do I not see thee now? Thy black resplendent hair;
Thy glory-beaming brow, and smile how heavenly fair!
Thine eyes are turned away—those eyes I would not see:
Their dark, their deadly ray would more than madden me.
There, go, Deceiver, go! My hand is streaming wet;
My heart's blood flows to buy the blessing
—To forget!"

Yet in this poem, as in "Wuthering Heights" where she creates Catherine, the component part of herself, good triumphs in the end. We feel the clash of conflict between good and evil which ravages her soul. The last lines are wrung from her in agony:

"Unconquered in my soul the Tyrant rules me still—
Life bows to my control, but *Love* I cannot kill!"

Emily's poetry is the battleground of a spiritual struggle which sorely tried her delicate body:

"Three gods within this little frame
Are warring night and day.
Heaven could not hold them all and yet
They all are held in me."

ALTHOUGH the victim of torturing temperament, ill-health and frustration, she fought bravely. Nevertheless, in lesser moments she indulged in orgies of self-pity: "No sighs for me, no sympathy", and in the same poem she calls herself: "The foster-child of sore distress". As a girl of nineteen she moans: "Dead, dead is my joy", and in 1845 comes:

"Heavy looms the dull sky,
Heavy rolls the sea—
And heavy beats the young heart
Beneath the lonely tree"

in a poem of such unalleviated gloom that it had been better written merely as an outlet for misery, and then destroyed. In one of her earliest poems, written at the age of eighteen, a robin sounds for her the notes of despair and defeat:

"I heard it then, you heard it too,
And seraph-sweet it sang to you;
And like the shriek of misery
That wild, wild music wailed to me!"

Nor is there a gleam of hope in the fragmentary: "Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away," written a year or so later.

In these early days Emily wrote several nightmarish poems pervaded by a sinister presence. One of the most powerful, written in retrospect after some terrible experience, is: "O God of Heaven! the Dream of Horror" Speaking of: "The ghastly night, the ghastlier morrow," she says:

"I flung myself upon the stone,
I howled and tore my tangled hair,
And then when the first gush had flown,
Lay in unspeakable despair."

The year 1837 seems to have been particularly black, lonely, and haunted; a time during which she stored up some secret resentment, not against any person, but against life itself. Perhaps this period served to strengthen that cold, hard streak in her which can only be called pride—her greatest sin. It was pride that lurked behind her aloofness, not shyness, as in the case of Anne, pride which made her angry with Charlotte for trying to help her and bring her poems to light. Pride enabled her to punish her faithful dog by battering his face with her bare fists till it bled, for pride is closely knit with cruelty. Finally, by pride she punished herself as well as making her sisters unhappy. Scorning help and advice, she refused to stay in bed or see a doctor until an hour or two before her death.

LIKE all people of genius, Emily suffered from the urge to explore the source of emotion and passion, and then to pursue it out to sea regardless of hurt to herself. In return she learned to love her sorrows, and after much self-punishment found strength through denial. In one of her later and finest poems, she writes:

"But when the days of golden dream had perished
And even Despair was powerless to destroy,
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened and fed without the aid of joy."

She also had brighter moments, when her stormy moods were shafted with sudden sun; and sometimes larks and linnets break through and shower her brown heath with song:

"The linnet in the rocky dells,
The moor lark in the air,
The bee among the heather-bells,
That hide my lady fair"—

But she found her greatest solace in the joy which blossoms in the heart of melancholy; when she conceived pain, she conceived also delight, its twin sister:

"My Darling Pain that wounds and sears
And wrings a blessing out of tears
By deadening me to real cares."

Emily experienced that intense longing for life so closely bound by the thongs of death-longing. This agony was increased during her final struggle with the disease which so quickly overwhelmed her. Her restricted home-life narrowed down to the care of her father and the profligate Branwell, though self-imposed, prevented a full and natural outlet for emotional energy. Probably Branwell, in spite of, or because of, his weakness, was the only man she ever loved. It is doubtful if her peculiar temperament would have allowed her to make a happy marriage. While a desire for human love is apparent in her poems, perhaps it is only subconscious. Her poetry, though passionate and often glowing with spiritual fire, never radiates heat, nor is it warm with the touch of flesh, but rather overcharged with longings she would most likely have been unable to assuage had she been given the chance. Probably no man could have broken the barriers of thorn around her proud and stubborn spirit, nor thawed her innate frigidity:

"The desert moon is dark; there is tempest in the air;
I have breathed my only wish in one last, one burning prayer—

A prayer that would come forth although
it lingered long;
That set on fire my heart, but froze upon
my tongue."

THROUGH her imagination she understood physical love, yet one doubts if she could have transposed her mental passion to a physical plane. Her poetry is impetuous, but with the cold torrents of mountain streams, and wild with the splendours of storm-ravaged trees and moors. When it reaches the human level, it is bloodless, corpse-like, and rings with echoes from the tomb:

The austere religious atmosphere in which Emily grew up must have lessened even her slender chance of happiness, for the God presented to her as a child was of the Old Testament rather than of the New: Jehovah, the half-pagan god of those bare Palestinian mountains, and not the All-Father. This Fearful Presence must have often inhabited her solitude. Emily was a passionate mystic, in love with nature, half-pagan herself, yet she strove to know, and ultimately accepted, a merciful God. But for all her strong religious and moral sense, there was a destructive element in her; she never became reconciled with orthodox Christianity. The daughter of a parson, she was contemptuous of the clergy, and had no use for man-made creeds and codes:

"Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts, unutterably
vain."

In spite of the conflicting influence of her demon spirit, and her desire to escape from reality, her innate moral sense never failed her. In the poem where she invokes the dream spirit of Fancy, she writes:

"I'll think, there's not one world above,
Far as these straining eyes can see,
Where wisdom ever laughed at Love—
Or Virtue crouched to Infamy,
Where pleasure still will lead to wrong
And helpless Reason warn in vain,
And Truth is weak, and Treachery strong
And Joy the shortest path to pain:"

THREE years before the end she invites death to "Strike again, Time's withered branch dividing", and in a lovely line of melody she recalls how "Sorrow passed and plucked the golden blossom". Yet four days later she implores the light of eternity:

"O stars and dreams of gentle night—
O night and stars return!"

The revelation that came to her through suffering places her among the greatest religious poets of English literature—perhaps only the greatest woman religious poet could write such lines as these:

"No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled
sphere;
I see Heaven's glories shine
And faith shines equal arming me from
Fear . . .
There is not room for Death
No atom that his might could render void
Since Thou art Being and Breath
And what Thou art may never be de-
stroyed."

She neither lived nor suffered in vain: her legacy to us is her immortality, for through her, no less than through our greatest poets, our dull sight is rewarded with vision beyond its understanding:

"Then dawns the Infinite, the Unseen its
truth reveals;
My outward sense is gone, my inward
essence feels—
Its wings are almost free, its home, its
harbour found;
Measuring the gulf it stoops and dares the
final bound!
O dreadful is the check—intense the
agony
When the ear begins to hear and the eye
begins to see;
When the pulse begins to throb, the brain
to think again;
The soul to feel the flesh and the flesh to
feel the chain!"

Short Story

"DEEP UNTO DEEP" *or* HOW TRUE?

BY GILES DUGDALE

SYLVESTER BRASH looked out on life through the safe porthole of books. To him the Charing Cross Road was a vast ocean of adventure. He had obtained most of his experience and all of his books second hand—all his books with one solitary exception, *Deep Unto Deep*, a volume he had written himself and published at his own expense ten years before. It must not be supposed that he was merely angling after first or rare editions. Sylvester Brash was a middle-aged bachelor of independent means searching for nothing less than second-hand Truth, for which he had the appetite of a gourmet rather than a gourmand, preferring it as sauce to season a narrative and avoiding the solid sirloins of Theology and Philosophy. Just such a book was his own *Deep Unto Deep*, a soiled copy of which now lay before his astonished eyes. He gazed at it for a few moments incredulously. It was as though he had met an old and intimate friend begging in the streets. After the first shock of surprise he picked the book up gently and gave the astonished bookseller half a crown for it, refusing to receive any change.

As he walked home with his precious purchase the author of *Deep Unto Deep* thought very deeply indeed for the finding of this copy was a much more extraordinary coincidence than the reader might imagine. A second-hand copy of this book was a very rare thing, very much rarer than copies in mint condition, for of these he still had, after ten years, hundreds on his hands while only fifty had been sold over the counter, most of them to well-wishing friends. A glance inside convinced him that this particular copy was one of the very few which had been bought in the ordinary way of business for it had the book-plate of one Lydia Gray, a lady whose name was unfamiliar to him.

He allowed his imagination to run riot and conjured up fanciful pictures of her. After a while he stopped, pulled the book from his pocket and began to examine it again more closely. With a flush of pride he turned over the pages and his excitement became intense when he noticed that in the margin its former owner had inserted in a thin spidery hand the approving comment: "How True!" not once but a dozen times. In places her approval was even more generously admitted, sometimes with the added authority of biblical references. As soon as he reached home he searched eagerly for a Bible in order to unlock their hidden praise. In all his large library he couldn't find a copy, but his housekeeper, very much delighted, lent him hers, the only book she possessed.

SYLVESTER BRASH was an exceedingly vain and self-centred man, and to hear his praises sung so sweetly by Lydia Gray through the mouthpiece of Hebrew Prophets made his face glow with pleasure. "I really *must* get a copy of 'the good old book' for reference", he mused approvingly, "a nice library copy".

But the scribbled comment which almost made him reel with emotional intoxication came, not from the Bible, but from the simple heart and brain of his unknown admirer herself. Right at the end of the book, on the last page of all, the thin spidery hand had scratched out the plaintive S.O.S.: "How happy my life might have been with such a wise counsellor and friend to guide me!"

Sylvester Brash didn't feel in the very least embarrassed. His first reaction was one of

intense pleasure at having concrete proof that the adverse opinion of the score of publishers who had all turned his book down couldn't tell a good book when they saw one. He was more than ever convinced that with proper distribution such cries of praise would have gone up all over the country—all over the world. They might well have made a fortune, although Sylvester Brash, who had inherited one, would have been content with fame and praise alone. He considered himself to be the peer of Carlyle, Emerson, Pascal and Confucius but because of the obtuseness of publishers only a handful of ardent women admirers, all of them middle-aged or elderly, had any inkling of it. His next feeling was one of irritation that he had received this tribute too late to hear from her own flattering lips the full intensity of this unknown admirer's devotion. He fully realized the probability implied by that long thin handwriting and that pathetic confession of loneliness. He knew them for the sure signs of elderly spinsterhood, but that did not worry him, far from it. Most of his personal admirers were spinsters and he preferred them elderly because there was less risk of his philosophic flirtations stirring up within them more disturbing emotions. He had detected the possessive desire for matrimony lurking at the back of almost every younger woman's mind, and Sylvester Brash was far too self-centred to be anything but horrified at the very possibility of having to adapt his selfish life to that of any other human being. There was no address on the title-page but at the bottom left-hand corner he noticed the tab of an Eastbourne bookseller who might be able to help him to trace any regular client of his who was individual enough to have her own bookplate. Although Sylvester Brash knew that the odds were heavily in favour of Lydia Gray being either dead or only a chance visitor he packed his bag with the slender hope of being able to give her the biggest thrill of her lonely life—and of his.

AT Eastbourne he booked a room at an hotel and then went straight to the shop, but when he got inside timidity overcame him. The proprietor advanced blandly towards him and asked if he could be of assistance.

"No thank you," Sylvester Brash answered weakly, "I-I only came to look round". His hand trembled over book after book as he rehearsed in his mind the most casual method of beginning his enquiries. "Oh, by the way!" he began at last, "I wonder if you happen to know if a lady of the name of Gray—er Lydia Gray is still living in the district?"

"Do you mean Mrs. Gray of 'The Willows', Lancelot Road?" the proprietor enquired.

"Yes, that's the one," Sylvester bluffed. "Is she a customer of yours?"

"Certainly, or rather, she used to be," the bookseller returned rather ruefully, "I'm afraid I've seen very little of her for some time".

SYLVESTER BRASH was at once both relieved and perturbed, relieved that she was still alive but perturbed that there was probably a Mr. Gray sufficiently nasty to account for his wife's unhappiness. He had no relish whatsoever for triangular drama, and if he had the misfortune to be married himself he would have resented most of all any kind of intellectual intimacy between his wife and other men. He admitted that there was a demon of jealousy, chained, manacled and toothless though it might be, hidden in his own Platonic breast. But, happy thought! Perhaps Mr. Gray was either dead or divorced. It was rather difficult to continue his enquiries without arousing suspicion. After implying an acquaintance with Mrs. Gray it would be humiliating to have to confess ignorance about so outstanding a circumstance in her life as a husband. He decided, however, on a reasonable risk, "Let me see now! When did poor Mr. Gray die?"

The bookseller considered a moment before replying, "It must be quite three years

since the account was closed. The will came as a complete surprise, of course, and she had to move from 'The Lodge' ".

Sylvester Brash was tempted to follow this interesting lead but decided it would be safer to keep to essentials.

"Of course," he agreed, knowingly, "And now she will not be exactly a young woman".

"Oh I don't know about that! Personally, I don't call forty-five OLD, at least not nowadays," came the alarming reply. The embarrassing recollection of several narrow escapes from desperate husband-hunters cautioned Sylvester Brash to return immediately to London, and a fear that the bookseller was becoming curious added to his blushing confusion. He realized too late that informative men are nourished by inquisitiveness, and the booksellers' red-rimmed little eyes were by now open to their fullest extent. To escape them he turned with a quick, nervous movement to stare with unseeing eyes at a row of cheap detective novels.

"She must have been a very handsome young woman when you used to know her," the bookseller persisted relentlessly. Sylvester Brash was overcome with bashful confusion. He imagined his impertinent questioner thinking, "The old story! Another rejected suitor sneaking back when his manly rival is safely out of the way!" But he managed to pull himself together and to say with every appearance of indifference, "Eh? Oh I hardly remember her features at all. Knew her husband better. Fine fellow, her husband!"

ALTHOUGH nature had severely limited the bookseller's powers of ocular distention she had more than compensated by endowing his eyebrows with an infinite mobility. Sylvester Brash, turning to reinforce the casualness of his answer by a wellfeigned glance of detachment, was confronted by a left eyebrow perched questioningly amongst the bookseller's shaggy locks. Turning away quickly he clutched wildly at the first book that came to hand and thrust it at the bookseller aggressively.

"This is the book I was looking for," he declared snappishly.

"Really! Edgar Wallace! Well, if it's excitement you require you couldn't do better," the bookseller commented suavely.

When he had escaped from the shop Sylvester Brash felt exceedingly depressed, for he knew that the safe adventure he had planned was over. To risk an encounter with an attractive widow was quite out of the question and his first impulse was to go straight back to London. Then he reflected that he would have to pay for his unused room at the hotel and he decided to get what value he could from his visit. He was depressed too because he had been stampeded into buying a vulgar, sensational new book which he would be ashamed to see on his shelves. He decided to glance through it to see just how bad it was, and on his way back to the hotel he sat under the trees and furtively began to read *Penelope of the Polyantha.*

VERY soon his disdainful attitude had thawed into one of intense absorption, and only when he had got to page 160 did he realize that he was both hungry and chilly. As he hurried back to the hotel the Wallace spell was just sufficiently broken for him to reflect that the author had introduced him to some extremely improbable people, but he had to admit that a very craftsmanlike use had been made of a limited vocabulary in telling the story. Greater tribute still, he went on reading the book quite openly during dinner, and remained, oblivious to the waiter's tactful efforts to dislodge him, long after the other diners had left the room. Shortly after midnight, when he threw the finished book aside, his literary reflex evoked the derisive comment, "Trash!" But for all that, he dreamed that he was rescuing a middle-aged Penelope from the clutches of a forging bookseller who was trying to kidnap her. And, "Trash!" he said again next morning, but he sat down immediately afterwards to write to Lydia Gray. The actual writing of it he found less easy than he had imagined it

would be. Coming down in the train every sentence of that hope-giving document had formed itself clearly in his mind, yet the beginnings he made seemed feeble in the extreme by comparison. He blamed the late Mr. Wallace for provoking again the desire and taking away the performance.

"The sweet Champagne of Literature!" he growled, flinging "Penelope" to the flames. After that he felt better and sat down to write a letter which befitted the author of *Deep Unto Deep*, offering his admirer, besides the return of the book, the opportunity to say how fervently she admired him if she cared to suggest a time when he might call to receive her tribute. He had not long to wait for an answer but he was startled to see that it was not written in the now familiar spidery handwriting. It seemed to him unsympathetic and businesslike by comparison and he was relieved when he discovered that it was written by Lydia Gray's companion-help at her dictation.

SHE gratefully acknowledged the return of the book which, as Mr. Brash had gathered from the annotations, had been one of her most precious possessions. She had lent it to a sick friend at whose death it had evidently been sold with the rest of her effects. But even greater than her pleasure at having the book again would be her proud delight at meeting its distinguished author. Mr. Brash's letter had come at a time when his wise understanding of life's problems would mean a great deal to her. She was suffering from rheumatism in the hand and the dear companion of many years was about to leave her. If Mr. Brash would be kind enough to call she would be very greatly honoured to receive him at any time.

The letter completely banished any remaining nervous apprehensions on his part and snatching his hat, he walked off briskly in the direction of Lancelot Road. As he entered the tiny garden of "The Willows", a rather unattractive yellow brick house on the outskirts of the town, he noticed a slight movement behind the lace curtains and knew that his arrival had really been awaited with a commendable eagerness. Even he was feeling rather more excited than a true philosopher should have done as he knocked at the door. It was opened by a woman whom he knew instinctively to be the companion. Quiet, tall and rigid, she led the way without a word towards the drawing room where Lydia Gray reclined on the sofa. He noted quickly that she was "well preserved", plump, and cheerful in appearance.

HE hovered uncertainly on the threshold, but it was too late to retreat. Creeping forward now rather timidly he held the hand she had extended in greeting and was soon put at his ease by the look of frank admiration and pleasure she gave him.

"Please excuse my left hand. Rheumatism is my thorn in the flesh—ONE of them", she added sighing, with a significant glance at the retreating form of her companion-help. As soon as they were alone she became immediately the marginal Lydia he had looked forward so eagerly to meeting.

"Can you really be the author of that beautiful book?" she murmured happily. "Providence is trying to make up for all its shortcomings at last!" She placed her left hand on his and stroked it impulsively and smiled up into his eyes adoringly as she did so. He assured himself that in just such a way a child needing sympathy, or a mother prepared to bestow it, would have looked. Anyhow, it was a perfectly safe look and he smiled back with philosophic indulgence. "I have often dreamed of this," she went on blissfully and although he tried hard to give the impression that for a successful author to make such dreams come true was no uncommon thing, he derived from the encounter a satisfaction besides which all his previous personal triumphs were as tinkling cymbals.

"You have been a tower of strength to me," she confided.

HE had often enough been a tower of strength to elderly spinsters but this was the first time he had acted in that capacity to a comparatively young and attractive widow. After a brief shock of misgiving he found his shoulders quite equal to the strain and encouraged her to reveal all the troubles at which she had hinted in *Deep Unto Deep's* margins. He listened, silently sympathetic, to the story of an unhappy marriage, an unjust will, a greatly diminished income, poor health, and finally the venality of a companion-help who was about to desert her just when she needed one most. How else could she regard Sylvester Brash's arrival than as the direct act of a previously neglectful Providence? His practical advice would be invaluable, and although when he arrived he had only intended to put at her disposal philosophical platitudes he soon warmed to the business of solving her practical problems as well.

The first thing to be done was to find someone to replace the mercenary companion-help. He was absolutely certain that he could persuade any number of lonely female friends to share the company of such a sweet and intelligent woman without any remuneration at all. His only real difficulty was to decide on which of a dozen or so the honour should fall, but he assured her most positively that he would soon provide her with a companion for whose qualities of heart and head he could personally vouch. Lydia Gray was a trifle scared by his noble plan to drag his friends to her rescue and protested that they might not be as ready as he had been to appreciate her complex character. He brushed her modest demurs aside and promised to return to London immediately to make a selection. It would be for Lydia Gray herself to make the final choice.

Unfortunately he found not one of his lonely spinster friends at all agreeable to the suggestion, indeed they were without exception grossly offended about it, for he had never thought of trying to find companion-helps for them. They warned him of the dangers incident to promiscuous friendships, and one of them went so far as to say that an admission vote for a Home for Fallen Women was the extent of her ability to help.

SYLVESTER BRASH was astounded and disgusted by the jealousy and uncharitableness they all showed towards his latest and most admiring disciple. The desire to administer a severe rebuke, an intense love of flattery, and the late Mr. Edgar Wallace all helped to inspire the eight-page letter he wrote to Lydia Gray proposing marriage as the pleasantest way out of her domestic dilemmas. Her reply, like the marginal references, was much more succinct. She telegraphed her acceptance of his proposal immediately.

In the vestry, after a quiet wedding service, Sylvester Brash stooped over the register to see once again the dear, thin spidery handwriting which had spelled Romance. "LYDIA BRASH" in a bold, round caligraphy mocked up at him from the page. But his wife's eyes were too full of glad tears to notice his look of horrified astonishment. She was thinking gratefully of her dead friend whose scribbled notes had given her a husband.

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

Edited by CHRISTOPHER SYKES

THE APPRECIATION OF NATURE

AN informed work on landscape-painting written by Sir Kenneth Clark* can only be definitively appraised by a critic who has devoted much time and labour to that study. In this particular case, however, no apology need be exacted for one review written by a person without claims to special knowledge, or indeed to artistic knowledge of any kind beyond acquaintance with a few well-known galleries, because apart from the fact that several eminent specialists have already had their say, the Slade lectures from which this book was made were addressed to an unprofessional audience.

In an introduction the author expresses doubts whether lectures recast in a literary form can have enduring value. One understands such qualms, for many reprinted addresses make disappointing reading, but this familiar anticlimax has not marred Sir Kenneth Clark's performance at Oxford. He is a writer of the first class, and whatever he has had to say is conveyed with beautiful and impressive exactitude here. It has been remarked that as a rule draughtsmen and painters are admirable writers; that by some unexplained process those who are possessed of the great manual skill needed in the visual arts become thereby proficient in the literary arts, in which such dexterity is only needed, if at all, in a rudimentary form. It is not so often remarked that the great majority of art-critics cannot write at all, and it is arguable that one reason why the best art is now so much more distant from popular appreciation than it was aforetime, is that in our day interpretation is left to art journalists, whereas in other ages it was considered the task of the men themselves who made the pictures. Sir Kenneth Clark stands out as a shining exception from a mass of jargoneers.

His book is not easy to classify. He insists that it must not be taken for a history of landscape-painting, though the outline of such a history binds his matter together. To describe it as reflections on landscape-painting would be to suggest a vagueness of subject which is not present. Perhaps it would not be unjust to say that he has written as much of the history of landscape-painting as can be contained in seven lectures without any loss of form in the whole.

It is a continual wonder that the pleasures of landscape (as the sense of these words is ordinarily understood), belong to a very rare order of things. A European, whether of wide or meagre education, seizes what is meant by the expression so instinctively that it is always astonishing for him to remember that only 500 years ago the very notion of delight in nature was obscure, and that to-day, between Europe and the Far East, the word "landscape" has no clear meaning except only for highly and exotically cultivated people. Why this should be so has never been quite satisfactorily explained, not even in this admirable work of perception. Sir Kenneth puts himself into the mind of the eleventh century, in which St. Anselm considered flowers with deep theological disgust, and from that point examines the appreciation of gardens which grew later, possibly from Crusader contacts with Persian ways. He relates how a passion for gardens was thereafter accepted as a part of respectable Christian thought, and how from thence the preoccupation with wild natural beauties developed by gradual stages, slowly overcoming the medieval horror of untamed land and of great mountains; and his exploration

* *Landscape into Art.* By Sir Kenneth Clark. *Murray.* 25s.

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is fascinating and convincing; but he does not explain how it is that a delight in gardens coupled with the same fear or contempt of wild landscape, such as was the mental habit of the middle ages, has continued in Islamic minds long after the disappearance of the circumstances which accompanied such an attitude in Europe, and remains a commonplace.

The rich content of this short book cannot be discussed in a single article beyond an indication of its shape. Sir Kenneth discerns a landscape of symbols in medieval art, which was suddenly enlarged into a "landscape of fact" by the genius of Hubert van Eyk. From here it later took a long course into fantasy, so long indeed that Sir Kenneth can include Turner and Van Gogh among the fantasists, while in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the art in its main stream became pre-occupied with the ideal landscape, and in the nineteenth century with what the author calls "The Natural Vision," commencing and culminating in masterpieces painted in France.

We are shown a bewilderingly great adventure of human imagination, and the strongest impression of the many left on a general reader is of the brevity and variety of that adventure. When we consider that Western history extends with only partially broken continuity over a period of 3,000 years, and that, according to Sir Kenneth, we may have reached the end of landscape-painting, the time occupied by that art in Europe is very small indeed. We notice that fact in some matters of detail. The Impressionists, whose influence on the response of men to nature can hardly be exaggerated, had begun and finished their work in less than fifteen years, while as for the variety of landscape-painting, it is not impossible that the great interpreters of nature have exhausted imagination by the breadth and virtuosity of their achievement.

The short terminal essay is among the best things in the whole book, especially in that part where he describes the dangers to which modern scientific knowledge exposes this art which began in an age of scientific discovery, and largely as a result of it. He examines the influence of photography, and perhaps shows an excess of subtlety here, for though he notes that "photography was bound to undermine the assumption that art was chiefly concerned with the imitation of appearances," he does not mention another very important fact, namely that photography also destroyed the assumption that painting, of any kind, was a *necessity*. It is too soon to know whether that event has liberated art or disarmed it fatally, but that it has happened and is likely to have had a decisive effect can hardly be denied.

Being a child of Scorpio the reviewer allows himself one disgruntled comment at the end. The title is unworthy of the whole. It belongs to a silly fashion when publishers liked to excite the curiosity of purchasers by phrases whose meaning out of context was doubtful. The words "Landscape into Art" signify nothing in particular, and they are ill-suited to describe this precise and scholarly book of art-criticism, which, without question, is among the best of its kind to have been written in the last fifty years.

CHRISTOPHER SYKES.

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A UNIQUE FRIENDSHIP

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH. By Robert Gathorne-Hardy. *Constable.* 18*s.*

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH has been called a "Saint" of Literature, by which presumably nothing more is meant than that he devoted himself wholeheartedly to reading and writing. Certainly, in a naughty world, he was a writer of eminent virtues; he fell into no grave sins. He might well be compared to a good little nun, devout, scrupulous, utterly faithful, tirelessly occupied with pious texts and convent economy. But he was no nearer real sanctity than the roughest best seller.

Mr. Gathorne-Hardy has written a most enjoyable book about Pearsall Smith's latter years. He befriended many young men of literary tastes. Perhaps the godless, childless, countryless, classless old man was seeking to establish a kind of posterity for himself, to found an order of ideal readers for his own exquisite work and for the rarer writers of the past. Mr. Gathorne-Hardy had a pre-eminent position among these protégés and this book is good evidence of what he learned during his apprenticeship. It would be fascinating reading even if the subject were not the author of a masterpiece—*All Trivia*—and of many valuable essays and researches. I have described it as "enjoyable", and that, I think, is the abiding impression, although much of the matter deals with the painful aberrations of senility. He met Pearsall Smith on the common ground of their enjoyment of seventeenth-century prose. The affection that soon sprung between them was the reciprocal enjoyment of one another's humour and sensibility. There was also the solid structure of hard literary work, each helping the other—it is interesting to learn the amount of help given by the pupil to the old master, not merely in the drudgery of verifying quotations and arranging notes, but in matters of absolute taste—but one cannot doubt that the strength of the bond between them was the belief that Life—and Art as the quintescence of Life—was an experience to be enjoyed. It is a keen vicarious pleasure to read of these two friends planning their foreign trips together, each tenderly protecting the other where he was weak and leaning on him where he was strong, each planning treats and surprises for the other, each giving and taking fully all the time.

This unique friendship ended very sadly. Most very old people, I suppose, are more or less insane at the end. In Pearsall Smith this decline took a most disagreeable form; one which Mr. Gathorne-Hardy describes, perhaps quite accurately, as demoniac possession. It was the gross fruit of the sly little obscenities and blasphemies and spites of his more controlled years. (One immediately thinks of a contrast—the last wanderings of Maurice Baring as recorded by Lady Lovat). There is the added fact that those nasty delusions took concrete form in the betrayal of obligations. But Mr. Gathorne-Hardy concludes his work

A January Book

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Edward Fitzgerald, the subject of this book, lived almost his whole life at Boulge in Suffolk. Mr. de Polnay has recently lived for two years at Boulge Hall. The inspiration, therefore, for this brilliant nostalgic portrait of an eccentric genius in a Victorian country setting, is first-hand. Not only the translator of the Rubá'iyát, but the whole Suffolk countryside come vividly alive. 12*s.* 6*d.*

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with a character-study which sets all in a sweet and sober light, so that it remains as a monument to happiness, workmanship, and even to wisdom of a sort. I don't know when I have enjoyed a modern book so much.

EVELYN WAUGH.

Novels

POINT OF NO RETURN. J. P. Marquand. *Hale.* 10s. 6d.

AFFAIRS OF THE HEART. Malcolm Muggeridge. *Hamish Hamilton.* 8s. 6d.

J. P. MARQUAND, whose *Point of No Return* has headed best-seller fiction lists in America for months, is one of the cleverest literary craftsmen alive. His book lays hold of the reader, the world it describes is so solidly constructed and furnished, its people are skilfully selected types with the little touches of individuality which make readers declare that it is "just like life".

The story is deceptively simple, as is the device by which the American small town of forty or fifty years back is recreated. Charles Gray is a youngish American executive who has so far been successful. He is the target of the better class American publicity campaigns; in the glossies you can see him driving a streamlined Cadillac and drinking the right brand of whisky out of the proper shaped glass. I noted with appreciation, however, that he has not yet succumbed to the right sort of after-shaving lotion. He has a nice, if rather managing wife, two children, he commutes to New York from a pleasant country suburb and he is in the running for the Vice-Presidency of his bank. Will he get it?

That is all. On this simple thread of suspense is hung the long flashback into Charles Gray's origins; the small town from which he came and in which his family was a known quantity, a world in which everybody had his place, though there were certain accepted

Prof. John Jewkes

ORDEAL BY PLANNING

This is the first cheap edition of a book that aroused widespread comment on publication eighteen months ago, when it was described by G. L. Schwartz in the *Sunday Times* as "a brilliant onslaught on the follies of planning." 7s. 6d. net

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ways of rising above it. This world is seen partly through the eyes of a "social investigator", whom Mr. Marquand guys exquisitely and partly through the nostalgic memory of Charles himself, who is sent by his President back to his home town on an investigation. The key figure of this journey into time past is Charles' father, the archtype of the unconventional, unsuccessful American. The whole book is quite extraordinarily dexterous, it reads swimmingly, and if it does not provoke in us the same bitter-sweet stirrings which it provokes in the Americans —perhaps because the commoner English "unit" is not the small town but the village— its humanity obtains a definite response. Skill is not a negligible quality and the reader who prefers a good novel on an unimportant subject to a bad novel on an important subject is not necessarily to be despised. This is unquestionably one of the writer's best books, it has a constant quizzical humour and that affection for humanity which is not merely the popular novelist's stock in trade, it must be, to convince, a genuine attribute.

THE warmest admirers of Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge, among whom I am included, would not say that his writing is characterized by an indiscriminate affection for his fellow men. The brilliant author of *Winter in Moscow* has perhaps never recovered from spring with the *Manchester Guardian*; his hatred of the professional progressive has made him one of the laureates of contemporary disenchantment. *Affairs of the Heart* is a curious novel, a satire ending on a note of sentiment, a pay-off of old literary scores which none the less provokes reflection of a profounder sort. It centres round the sudden death, in the British Museum Reading Room, of Ossian Routledge, the successful half of a collaboration for the production of detective stories. Like everyone who has had to spend any time among the ossified relics of human knowledge assembled under that vast dirty dome, Mr. Muggeridge has a fascinated repulsion from the British Museum Reading Room. He has written, in his introduction to his study of Samuel Butler, *The Earnest Atheist*, a panegyric of hate to it which I have never forgotten. He was bound, at some time, to produce a murder in the B.M.R.R. Here it is.

Wraithby, the narrator of the story, is a literary hack who was a witness of Routledge's death. Routledge's widow, who is psychic (and an epitome of everything else about women which the author dislikes) alleges that she had a presentiment that Routledge was due to die and she commissions Wraithby (or rather, her agent does so for her) to investigate his death.

What Wraithby really investigates is Routledge's life: his four mistresses, his jealous collaborator, the curious relation between the two men and Routledge's wife. The book contains some extraordinarily funny scenes; the lunch at the *Geranium* between the needy author and the prosperous literary agent; the interview between Wraithby and his client, Mrs. Routledge; the evening spent with Barbara, the emancipated daughter of the rectory who becomes one of the nudes in the *Pagoda* theatre revue. But, even in the most ludicrous episodes, such as the scattering of Routledge's ashes, with appropriate recitation from *Lycidas*, over the heedless Downs, there is that undertone of intense feeling for some principle of truth and harmony which the life described seems to violate. What this may be however, is never made clear in this book. Perhaps the clue is in that wonderful opening chapter of *Winter in Moscow* which describes the dewy morn of a revolution, the anarchist's fugitive dream of a free society, before there is time to forge new chains. For intelligent readers, this is the wittiest book of the year.

RUBY MILLAR.

Short Notices

FRANÇOIS MAURIAC

THE DESERT OF LOVE. THE ENEMY. By François Mauriac. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

M. MAURIAC is an author who is always greatly captured by exploring the implications of the sexual relationship. Neither love nor lust can be, as so many people to-day pretend to think, casual and irrelevant. Every man, as both the father and the son in *The Desert of Love*, discover for themselves in slightly different words, is mad when he is solitary, and it is only through love and through lust that the barriers of solitude can be broken down—through love permanently, through lust apparently and temporarily, but at the expense of raising in the end a higher barrier.

M. Mauriac is among the first of living story-tellers, and it is hardly necessary to commend the power of his tales. *The Desert of Love* tells the story of how a father—a much respected but unloved doctor—and his schoolboy son both fall in love with the same loose woman. There is an improbability about this new version of the familiar triangle which certainly detracts from the story, while it is difficult not to see the real tragedy of the old father as somewhat ridiculous because there is no attempt to evoke the pathos which alone could redeem such absurdity. In *The Enemy* we are shown an irreligious lady guest in a strictly Jansenistic household. The guest divorces and marries again and is therefore expelled from the house. She revenges herself by making herself the mistress of the son of the house, who in his turn in the end tires of her and at the same time finds it difficult to throw her off. *Odi et amo*. *The Enemy* is the more conclusive of the two stories, as M. Mauriac in it comes the nearer to suggesting a solution of his problem.

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It is supererogatory to commend Mr. Hopkins' translation, but Mr. Hopkins' danger is that he sometimes falls into a verse rather than a prose rhythm. "Westward, the pine-trunks stand in black array, Whipped by brief squalls born on the bitter wind," would make two lines of a rather good Tennysonian poem.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS.

NEARLY, BUT NOT QUITE

SCENES FROM A BOURGEOIS LIFE. By Alaric Jacob. *Secker and Warburg.* 15*s.*

ALTHOUGH brought up in comfortable circumstances, Mr. Jacob did not do what his family had every right to expect of him, either play a distinguished part in government service, or make a lot of money in commerce. Instead, at the age of nineteen, he became a cub reporter, and in due course a successful war correspondent during the Second World War. One of the results of this uneasy peace is that he has found time to write his autobiography under the intriguing title of *Scenes from a Bourgeois Life.*

The earlier chapters are superb, as enthralling as faithful reporting always must be. The portraits of his parents and their contemporaries are drawn to the life; and the descriptions of his childhood and schooldays make interesting reading. Even his adolescent strugglings with sex, a subject that usually makes the adult reader shut a book with a bang and turn for relief to *The Times* crossword puzzle, can be and will be read with interest and delight. That, in itself, is a real triumph.

This book, then, is nearly a first-rate autobiography—nearly, but not quite. The reason is because in the latter stages the author abandons straight reporting and sets down his own ideas concerning this troubled world of international relations. In the desire to make his point he sometimes gets things out of their right proportions. For instance, in a detailed account of the last great war it is surely hardly correct to dismiss Mr. Winston Churchill in one or two short sentences. Admittedly, that is a common newspaper method of belittling an opponent—"Lord Blank said this at length; and Mr. So-and-So also spoke." But history, which is factual reporting, will show that during the early nineteen-forties Mr. Winston Churchill did much more than speak.

However, at the end of his book, despite his admiration for Russia, Mr. Jacob drinks a sincere toast to England; so there is every reason to hope that in his future writings he will run his country down a little less and try to help her a little more. Even so, this is a book to be read, either with complete agreement or pleasurable disagreement. For, no matter how much it may annoy some readers, none will find it dull.

A. G. STREET.

A NEO-NOMINALIST

THE CONCEPT OF MIND. By Gilbert Ryle. *Hutchinson.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

SCHOLASTIC philosophy fell into two main schools, the realists and the nominalists, the former so-called because they attributed absolute reality to the "ideas" of Plato, or "universals", whereas the latter said that the ideas were mere words, reality being manifested only in individual things. Such are the chances of philosophical nomenclature that the eighteenth-century idealist philosophers such as Berkley and Kant may be related to the scholastic "realists", modern philosophies of behaviourism and logical positivism to the nominalists.

Professor Ryle's philosophical approach is certainly more nominalistic and he says that "the general trend of this book will undoubtedly, and harmlessly, be stigmatized as behaviourist". Still, his philosophy need not be materialistic (any more than was that of

the nominalists), and he says towards the end of his book, "Man need not be degraded to a machine by being denied to be a ghost in a machine." "Ghost in a machine" is the key phrase to Professor Ryle's philosophy or perhaps rather system of logic. The person is a unity; and much logical error in philosophy is analogous to a visitor to Oxford who should have seen several colleges, libraries, lecture rooms, and then ask "but where is the University?" Similar, says Professor Ryle, is the logical error of regarding the mind behind action as a "ghost in the machine", somehow separate from and other than the act. Ingenious though his new logical approach may be, he seems to have considered at undue length the individual aspects of it with which he deals in this book.

BRIAN LUNN.

NIGERIA

LAST CHANCE IN AFRICA. By Negley Farson. *Victor Gollancz, Ltd.*, 1949. 384 pp. 15*s*.

KENYA, which is the subject of Mr. Negley Farson's latest book, *Last Chance in Africa*, is only one of the many territories that exemplify the African brand of the malaise from which the world at large suffers. No author could be more deeply aware of this Nigerian malaise than Mr. Farson; for being intensely human, he believes that the African problem of black and white is ultimately one of human beings and not of politics and economics. Because of his wide sympathies Mr. Farson somehow manages to remain completely impartial, which is quite unusual in a work of this kind. Though he has evidently put in an enormous amount of work into a book that will have to be taken with equal seriousness by the Colonial expert in Whitehall and the man "on the spot", he is at his best when he leaves imperial problems behind and turns his attention to the beasts of jungle and bush. One wishes indeed that there were more about zebra, lion and giraffe and less about beasts with long statistics to them. The readability of the book would also have gained if the author had ordered and subdivided his material more clearly, and graced his chapters by some sort of headings. But without these, without a contents page and without an index, even the most sympathetic reader often finds himself utterly lost in Mr. Farson's jungle.

ROM LANDAU.

A LATE HANNOVERIAN

THE NOBLE DUKE OF YORK. By Alfred H. Burne. *Staples Press.* 25*s*.

FREDERICK, DUKE OF YORK, second son of George III, is remembered to-day (when he is remembered at all) as the man who marched his men up the hill and down again, and as the Commander-in-Chief who abetted the enrichment of his mistress out of the profits of military patronage. During his

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life he was certainly unfortunate in the skill of his political enemies and he has fared little better with posterity. But he was the administrative head of the British Army at a very glorious period of its history, and he won from that army a notable tribute of affection and respect. Here is the paradox which Colonel Burne has set himself to resolve.

This book, based upon the examination of a considerable mass of unpublished material, fills a gap in English military biography. It is, further, concerned to vindicate the reputation of its subject as "one of the outstanding figures in an outstanding generation". Its main argument is directed to showing that during 1793 and 1794, the Duke as leader of an expeditionary force in Flanders proved himself a general of considerable ability, and that later he was personally responsible for many of the military reforms which were undoubtedly effected between 1795 and 1827. The case is not always presented with lucidity, and (as may be suspected) it is sometimes overstated. But it is none the less challenging and formidable. Colonel Burne has now placed the burden of proof fairly and squarely upon the shoulders of those who would uphold the traditional and contemptuous estimate of the "Soldiers' Friend".

Much ado is now made to rescue Queen Victoria's uncles from the attacks of Victorian historians. In no instance is this task easier than in the case of the Duke of York. Today he looks over London from the top of his tall column. Is it possible that, as Colonel Burne suggests, he deserved that eminence? At all events, it is seemly that we should now be given the opportunity of learning more about a man who is in effigy so familiar, and in actuality so little known.

DAVID DOUGLAS.

A JOYOUS TRACT

DRAYNEFLETE REVEALED. By Osbert Lancaster. Illustrated by the Author. *John Murray.* 8*s* 6*d. net.*

MR. LANCASTER is a good-natured and ingenious satirist. He points his moral with urbane wit and adorns his tale with lively drawings. In this light-hearted burlesque of a certain kind of guide book he has obviously enjoyed himself and he infects his readers with his own delight.

The history of Drayneflete (inspired name!) and its leading personalities is lovingly traced from the Bronze to the Cripps Age. In a gallery of notable portraits especially commendable is that of Miss Shelmerdine Parsley-Ffidgett, ill-starred daughter of Sir Jasper, Baronet. Her brief but husband-studded life is crisply and poignantly etched.

The author's appreciation of architectural excesses is well known. In *Drayneflete* he gives it full play. The series of pictures which show the "progress" of the place is irresistible in its subtle detail and truth to type. Not less engaging are the drawings which depict the growth of the suburbs from a poet's retreat, established by a noble patron, to the sprawling horror characteristic of these days.

How Mr. Lancaster has avoided absorption in the Ministry of Town and Country Planning is a mystery. It is a disturbing thought that he might yet suffer some direction of his labours, with incalculable advantage to that persevering and prohibitive body but dead loss to his countless followers.

There could be no better antidote to the gloom of Winter and the impending economic blizzard than this piece of erudite and inspired foolery. It should make any reader who is capable of deep feeling weep—with helpless laughter.

SYDNEY J. MAIDEN.

CHINESE PUZZLES

THE WISDOM OF CHINA. Edited by Lin Yutang. *Michael Joseph.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

IN an age wherein manners are giving way to assertion, when the ideal is no longer the gentleman, it is pleasant to hope, but with little confidence, that the Chinese will retain under Communist domination their gracefully mannered civilization, of which this

anthology is a fruit. Inevitably much of its content is meaningless to Western readers, but what it contains of wisdom, being universal, may as well be taken from a Chinaman as from Shakespeare or other English authors, whose works are on the whole more easily assimilable by the English than those of writers who, though admirably introduced and translated by Dr. Lin Yutang, favour an imagery and an idiom so alien as to be frequently suspect. Much of Eastern philosophy suggests the deliberately naïve, nor does it astound us to be told by Dr. Yutang that every Chinese gentleman was expected in retirement to produce a volume of poetry, since small leisure could account for a heavy output of the verse, putatively Chinese, fashionable in suburban drawing rooms before the war. It would perhaps be ungenerous to suggest an analogy between Chinese poets and Left Wing Intellectuals, yet one gathers the impression that a man incapable of poetry may become a Chinese poet, as a man without intellect may be reputed a Left Wing Intellectual. This comprehensive anthology, however, will provide those who regard over-simplification as the solution of complex problems, who believe that wisdom is best acquired elsewhere than from lived experience, with an engaging instrument for their further bemusement.

BASIL HARVEY.

JOHN CLARE'S POEMS

POEMS OF JOHN CLARE'S MADNESS. Edited by Geoffrey Grigson. *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* 21*s.*

MR. GRIGSON'S selection from the Clare manuscripts includes a majority of poems not previously published and improved texts of many poems already known. His long introduction gives a clear and authoritative account of the last years of Clare's life. Unfortunately, Mr. Grigson has been in a severely scholarly mood while editing the volume and although his textual labours are valuable they do not compensate the reader for the lack of criticism of the poems themselves. Perhaps he is preparing a critical study of Clare's work as a whole. No one else could do it so well.

Clare's madness obscured and softened his genius. It did not produce coruscations; he was no Christopher Smart. The poems in this collection range from lyrics of great originality and beauty, like "*I Am*", to streams of banal pastoral in tripping, self-confident rhythms, from Shakesperian phrases like "*I am the self-consumer of my woes*" to the depths of "*The broom flower was yellow as a new found rock o' gold, And the evening gloamed as mellow as my eyes did e'er behold*". Clare's fluency comes as a relief after the constipation of so much modern verse; but it soon palls. At its weakest his work is mere vague country

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sentiment. In his best poems, however, he sees the correspondences between the external world and his own mind, and his acute awareness of his own condition heightens his observation of nature. Clare is a minor poet who occasionally rises out of his class.

R. G. G. PRICE.

A GALLANT RECORD

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF IRISHMEN IN FRANCE. By Richard Hayes. *M. H. Gill and Son.* 15*s.*

ONCE again Dr. Richard Hayes has placed the historian of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries heavily in his debt. To say that this work is important is an understatement, for it is invaluable to those who wish to understand the background of the period which it covers. A word of thanks is also due to the public spirit of the editor of *Studies*, in whose pages the book originally appeared in serial form.

This is, in reality, more than the mere biographical dictionary which its author modestly claims it to be, for the story of the "wild geese" is the history of a nation. Here the reader will find the Rev. George Kelly, who was chaplain to Atterbury and one of the Seven Men of Moidart; the gallant Wogan, who rescued Clementina Sobieska at Innsbruck; the brave and ill-used Lally; and two Marshals of France, Lord Clare and the Duke of Feltre.

Gratitude, even among historians, is often merely an expectation of favours to come, and not a few who will prize this book most highly will hope that Dr. Hayes can now be persuaded to do for Irishmen in Spain the notable service which he has here performed for their fellow-countrymen in France.

CHARLES PETRIE.

ECONOMIC CRISES PAST AND FUTURE

By C. GORDON TETHER

THE economic crisis is showing a tendency to establish itself as a more or less regular feature of life in Britain in much the same way as in an earlier period the political revolution established itself as a regular feature of life in Latin-American republics. In the four and a half years that have passed since the close of the war there have, in addition to a number of relatively important internal economic upheavals, been three major crises in the country's external payments affairs. The first fell when the Americans precipitately withdrew Lend-Lease facilities within a few days of the close of the war against Japan to leave the country with a foreign exchange income which was pitifully inadequate to pay for the goods it needed to import from abroad. The second came to a head when an attempt was made to implement the convertibility clause of the American Loan agreement in the summer of 1947. And the past year, of course, produced the sterling devaluation crisis.

PERHAPS the most remarkable thing about these recurring economic crises is that although on each occasion it seemed that the country could be saved from disaster only at the cost of extensive adjustments in its internal and external economic arrangements,

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neither in the internal nor in the external spheres have its policies been substantially changed. Despite frequent assertions by members of the Government that the country was living beyond its means, the standard of life at home has been allowed to rise rather than the reverse. Abroad, the sterling countries have been encouraged to run large deficits in their external payments at Britain's expense by generous releases from the sterling balances and virtually unrestricted access to the London capital market.

IN these circumstances, it is not altogether surprising that the general public in Britain is beginning to display an apathy about economic affairs, that it is forming the view that however alarming from time to time the newspaper headlines may appear, however black the outlook may be painted by economists and politicians, life in Britain in the future is not likely to be materially more difficult than it has been in the recent past, no matter how many more economic crises there may be in store. Nor can it be wondered at that the sterling creditor countries are turning a deaf ear to hints from Whitehall that henceforward it would be in their own interests no less than in that of Britain to exercise greater restraint in the matter of their use of sterling balances for supporting trade deficits. They probably believe that Britain will be able to surmount future economic crises in the same way as she has surmounted those of the past few years whether or not she gets help from them.

THE plain truth, however, is that the country will be much less able to withstand the impact of any future crises than it has been to meet the force of the economic storms of recent years. The success that has attended official efforts to extricate the country from the crises of 1945, 1947 and 1949 has been due in the main to a combination of good luck and resort to a series of expedients. The 1945 crisis was surmounted because it was possible to persuade the Americans and Canadians that they had a duty to loan funds to assist economic recovery of an ally who had borne a disproportionately large share of the economic cost of the war. In 1947 it was the advent of the Marshall Plan, with its promises of a continuing supply of dollars, which averted disaster at the eleventh hour. In 1949 the situation could be prevented from getting out of control first by throwing a large part of the remaining gold reserve into the gap between dollar earnings and receipts and later by devaluation of the currency.

WE certainly cannot count, however, upon further large dollar loans in the future and the Americans have already made it plain that Marshall Aid will be allowed to tail off in the years ahead until it finally comes to an end in 1952-53. Resort to devaluation as a stimulus for flagging export earnings cannot be attempted again without lowering the prices of our exports in relation to the prices of our imports to such a degree that, to pay for the present volume of imports, we shall have to divert to overseas markets an even larger proportion of current production than we do at present, thereby severely restricting supplies for the home market. Again, the gold and dollar reserve has fallen to such a low level that it would simply not suffice to bridge any substantial new gap between hard currency payments and receipts for a space of more than a few months.

IT would be most unwise to assume, therefore that future payments crises will be disposed of with the same ease as those of the initial post-war period. And that means, as Sir Stafford Cripps himself admitted in a statement shortly after the devaluation of sterling, that in future we shall have to think less in terms of expedients and more in terms of finding fundamental solutions for our economic problems. The country simply cannot run the risk of exposing itself to another major external payments crisis. If it fails to work out a permanent solution for

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its currency difficulties in the period ahead all the misfortunes which the public has so often been warned would come its way if it failed to make a full recovery effort—unemployment, less food, abbreviated social services and so on—will, when the next crisis has come and gone, probably be found to have been translated into a painful reality.

IT would be pleasant to be able to point to indications that the work of finding fundamental solutions for our payments difficulties was going forward at a satisfactory pace. But it is not possible to do so. In particular the outlook on gold and dollar account, which is the very heart of the problem, looks far from promising. It is true that since devaluation of sterling the drain on the gold and dollar reserve has stopped. But the improvement appears to have been due in substantial measure to economies in dollar spendings by Britain and other sterling countries rather than to any increase in earnings from exports to dollar countries. For up to now such advantage as the United Kingdom has derived from the increase in the volume of goods it has been possible to sell on dollar markets has been fully cancelled out by the effect of the fall in the dollar prices of British goods marketed in these countries. Moreover, the experience of other sterling countries in this matter has been very similar. Malay has sold more rubber to the United States and Canada, Australia has increased her wool shipments to these countries in quantitative terms. But the total of the dollars yielded has been no greater than before devaluation because the dollar yield per unit is now lower than it was before September.

EVEN assuming that the dollar spendings of this country and other sterling countries which obtain their net requirements of dollars from the reserve maintained by Britain can be restricted to recent levels, the dollar shortage will grow acute when the amount of help being derived from Marshall Aid takes a new plunge next July. That is, unless in the meantime ways can be found of stepping up sales of sterling goods on dollar markets at a much faster pace than has obtained hitherto. But can such an expansion be achieved without substantial modification of present official British policies in the internal and external economic spheres? The Government professes to believe it can. It seems to be pinning its hope on the growing appreciation on the part of industry and commerce of the importance of increasing sales of sterling goods on hard currency markets. But many of those who have a close acquaintance with the country's external payments difficulties would feel easier in their minds if the Government would also show itself prepared to utilize other weapons at its disposal for channelling exports into the dollar countries. They believe that the correct way, indeed in the long run the only way, of making sure that all that the dollar countries are prepared to absorb of British produce does reach these markets is to reduce the pull on potential dollar-earning goods from the home market and the "easy" markets in soft-currency countries. They hold that the way to do this is by an appropriate disinflation policy at home coupled with a retrenchment policy in the sterling area which would embrace both a reduction of repayments of sterling war debts and a stricter supervision of capital movements within the area.

CRITICS of the Government's policy do not say that hopes that the lowering of British prices as a result of devaluation will produce the required expansion in dollar exports are sure certain to be disappointed. What they do say is that there cannot be any certainty that they will be fulfilled. They argue—in these circumstances and in view of the vital importance of averting a resumption of the dollar drain, the Government has no right to refrain from employing the additional weapons at its disposal for helping to bring about the desired expansion in dollar earnings.

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